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FABIAN

FABIAN FAILURES AND SUCCESSES

by Bernard Shaw

The advantage of old age is by no means an access of wisdom, old fools being quite as disastrous as young ones: it is in certain experiences that youth cannot share. I have carried the infant children of Fabians to bed in my arms; and I have lived to see them grow up, develop politically, and decay politically through adolescence, youth, middle age, elderly spread, and finally die with their political destinies completely fulfilled. Two generations have passed like this during my lifetime; and this experience cannot be claimed by the brightest young Fabian who quite rightly regards me as a now negligible back number. He is bustling in a turbulent crowd of agitators of whom I have never heard; but for me the movement has fallen into its historical perspective; and it is my privilege to pontificate accordingly.

What the founders of the Fabian Society did was to destroy the immense prestige and authority of Cobdenist Liberalism, with Gladstone as its Grand Old Man and Bright as its most convincing spokesman. We really did knock *Laisser-faire* into a cocked hat. Sidney Webb made John Bright obsolete: he is not now even a name to Fabian youth. State enterprise, State control State finance, factory legislation and municipal trading, regarded by Gladstone as evils to be kept down to the barest police limits, rose in public esteem to be the only hope of survival for civilisation. The Liberal Party, between which and the Conservatives the difference in power was so small that at Westminster the Irish Nationalist group held the balance of power between them, dwindled into a negligible group and was supplanted as the official Opposition by the new Labor Party. The only ultra-Cobdenist candidate at the recent by-elections, a brother of Sir Stafford Cripps, forfeited his deposit. And it was all done in a thoroughly English way, without a word about Karl Marx or a phrase from his doctrine of dialectical materialism, though Socialists who are not essentially Marxist are not Socialists at all.

Now this job was to the good; and it would be easy for me, as a notable member of the Fabian Old Gang, to spend the remnant of my life bragging about it. But wait a bit. It was a big success; but did it produce the result we were aiming at? Can the new Fabians play skittles with Fascism as the old ones did with Cobdenism? Are our present Parliaments, in which Liberalism may be ruled out as extinct, and crude Toryism is backed by overwhelming electoral majorities undreamt of in the nineteenth century, an advance on the Parliaments in which Gladstone, an ex-Tory, and Disraeli (an ex-Radical) contested the Treasury Bench and won only by what now is laughed at as a handful of votes? We seemed to have achieved the impossible when John Burns, the Man with the Red Flag, an Amalgamated Engineer, was made President of the Local Government Board; yet it was not long before the most intransigent of the Fabians, Ramsay Macdonald, for whom the Old Gang could never go far enough, was Prime Minister in a Labor Government. It came as a glorious success; but what does it look like now in retrospect?

Well, that depends on the side from which you are viewing it. From the Fabian Socialist point of view it was an utter failure: a Government of Tory Democrats led by Lord Randolph Churchill or his half American son Winston, would have done better. But from the plutocratic side it was a colossal success. The Fabians had demonstrated that the possibilities of modern scientific industry are far beyond the resources of old-fashioned private enterprise

conducted by little competing partnerships with capitals of three or at most four figures. They could be realised only by State or municipal authority and revenue. Whatever party could capture these would rule the roost. The Fabian Society intended Labor to capture them. Its pamphlet *A Plan of Campaign for Labor*, written by Webb and myself, was a plan to create a Fabian Party in Parliament and oust the Liberals. But to do this required money: and the Fabians had no money: much of its best work was done before it had any bank account except that of its treasurer, who, being unpaid, was too hard up to be allowed an overdraft. To get the money we had to enlist the Trade Unions, made class conscious by the Webbs' *History of Trade Unionism*. We succeeded. I well remember Edward Pease, our secretary, telling me triumphantly that we had roped in The Miners' Federation and that the money difficulty no longer existed. But I shook my head and said: 'What then becomes of Socialism?' For I knew that the miners' leaders were not Socialists. They were all for seats in Parliament and State regulation of employers (not of the Trade Unions) by means of factory legislation; but they were out to exploit Capitalism, not to abolish it. They quite agreed with the Fabians that private owners' royalties should be confiscated; but their object was not the socialisation of the mining industry but the addition of the royalties to its profits, of which the Trade Unions would then capture the lion's share and finally the entire booty.

Accordingly, when Russia revolted against Capitalism in 1917, the fiercest denunciation of Communism and its leaders, Lenin and Trotsky, came from the Labor Front Bench in Parliament. Even at a Fabian public meeting I had to rise and remind members that the Russian side was our side. And the Russians themselves described me good naturedly as 'a good man fallen among Fabians' and proceeded to make every mistake against which I and Sidney Webb, with our *Inevitability of Gradualness*, had urgently warned them; so that after nearly starving Russia to death by 'expropriating the expropriators' before they were ready to carry on their work without a moment's delay, they had to save the situation by the New Economic Policy, which was nothing but the old economic policy revived and tolerated until the Socialist policy had developed far enough to take its place. The lesson they might have learned from us was soon forced on them by bitter experience. The Russian system is now a Fabian system; and we may claim it as a proof of the soundness of Fabian foresight and policy; but it was delayed at a frightful cost in suffering, and at last established not at all by the arguments in the Webbs' *Industrial Democracy*, nor the essays in which I warned Utopians against imagining that the Socialist program would be Capitalism at its worst on Monday, revolution victorious on Tuesday, and Socialism in full swing on Wednesday. And, judging by the reckless extent to which we are taxing Capitalist incomes to extinction under pressure of war without a thought of seeing that the production and distribution activated by these incomes is continued without interruption, we seem likely to make all the Russian mistakes over again and pay the same price for them.

It is not much of a triumph now to be able to say 'We told you so' even if anyone cared a dump whether we did or not. No matter what we foresaw: let us consider what we did not foresee. We expected that the Marxian definite confrontation of classes would produce a definite confrontation of two policies: bourgeois Capitalism and proletarian Communism. It was far too simple a generalization. What happened was the rise of State Aided Capitalism, which exactly suits both the dominant Conservative Trade Union leaders, among whom Sir Walter Citrine is now conspicuous, and the highminded and academically cultivated re-discoverers of the Moralized Capitalism of the now forgotten Positive Philosophy of Auguste Comte, of whom one of the very ablest of the Fabian old gang, Sydney (Lord) Olivier, who died last year, was a disciple before he became a Socialist.

It may be that State Aided Capitalism, now called neither Comtism nor Trade Unionism, but Fascism in Italy, National Socialism in Germany, and Freedom in England, where we are up to the waist in it, is the best arrangement of which we are capable at present. The case against it is far more difficult for the young Fabians of today than the simple case of Socialism versus Unsocialism was for the Old Gang. The opposition I had to face gave me no trouble: I could walk away with any audience that was interested enough to offer me its platform; The Capitalists never knew how to handle their own case, which I understood thoroughly. They never knew where they were; and I did. This, I may say, was and is a very rare accomplishment of mine. When I was through with Marx and Proudhon I went through with De Quincey, Ricardo and Jevons: a process which took about four years of such study as I am capable of. Today the percentage of speakers and writers on Capitalism who know what they are talking about is smaller than even the Socialist percentage; and neither exceeds that of the members of the Church of England who have ever read its Thirty-nine Articles.

What troubled me most was that my Socialist lectures were mostly received like Christian sermons except that there was loud applause instead of reverent silence. I preached every Sunday for twelve years; and every Monday my crowded and enthusiastic audiences went back to their capitalistic routine as if I had merely played the organ to them. If I had to begin over again I would never set a foot on a platform: I would make for the microphone and the news reel. I have lived to broadcast to millions of people seated snugly by their firesides. When I compare that experience with haranguing a little crowd on a common or market square, and setting up a record by collecting sixteen shillings in my hat, I realise the utter obsolescence of my old street corner propaganda. Freedom of the Press is a played-out slogan nowadays. Freedom on the Wireless is most pressingly up-to-date.

The Fabian Old Gang scored a big success by planting what was called Gas and Water Socialism on the new municipal bodies that were born in the eighteen eighties. It carried the day in London, and was then taken out of our hands by the Capitalists, who, when they woke up to our game after a few years of it, had money enough to plaster London with posters picturing the new Progressivism as a horrible scoundrel aiming an evil eye and a pointing finger at the rate-payers, and shouting ' It's your money we want '. This defeated us until the Labor Party regained command of the Council, by which time the old Fabians were on the shelf.

But let not the young Fabian of today despise Gas and Water Socialism. Not only is municipal government an invaluable school for Socialists and Labor statesmen: it is the standing practical illustration of the success with which the Westminster parliament was reduced to absurdity by the Party System invented 250 years ago by a clever peer to nullify the House of Commons, but happily never applied to the municipal corporations, where it is only played at by people who do not understand it. I was, for six years, a municipal councillor, and never had to vote on any question except on its merits, whilst at the same time men of my acquaintance had spent thirty years in Parliament without having ever voted on any question except whether there was to be a political crisis and a general election, involving the loss of their seats and a risk of not regaining them. As Dickens, an ex-parliamentary reporter, rightly told us, the main business of Government under such a system was, when voters were roused to demand that something democratic should be done, to find out how not to do it. The Fabians failed to grasp this aspect of the situation; and even when the Webbs pointed out that we needed at least two central parliaments, respectively industrial and political, and several other organs of government, it was still argued that parliaments must be modelled on the Westminster imposture. The young Fabians must reconsider this very seriously; for they are now up against Hitler shouting quite truly that British democracy is a lie,

and Mussolini describing Liberty as a stinking corpse. We may defeat Hitler and Musso ten times over; but it will remain true that both these men, with no social advantages, rose to supreme power on the general disgust and disappointment at the performances of the Party Parliaments in which, as I said (meaning exactly what Hitler and Mussolini, Dickens and Oswald Mosley said) that if we persist in governing ourselves by parliaments which take 30 years to do a week's work we shall some day have to do thirty years' work in a week, which will give us an extremely unpleasant rush hour, and most likely a very bloody one.

The truth is, the Old Gang was too completely preoccupied with domestic industrial questions to have time for imperial ones. When General Roberts and Robert Blatchford told us that we should have to fight the Germans we let the warning pass by us as imperialist babble. I myself did not wake up to the gravity of the diplomatic situation until the Fabian Society had passed its 25th year. I then proposed the arrangement effected later at Locarno, when the war had been adjourned after four years fighting, and it was useless; but I could never interest the Fabians in Foreign Affairs, just as I could not interest them in Art or in metaphysics, however cognate they might be to Socialism. I hope the present generation is wiser; for though division of labor is as necessary in Socialist propaganda as in any sort of mass production, and the Society should still concentrate on British economics and British democracy and not wander off into half a dozen different camps, yet in its distaste for militarism and its share in the anti-clerical reaction (sometimes calling itself Science and claiming infallibility, omniscience, omnipresence, and complete lawlessness in pursuit of its notion of knowledge) it had better not forget that the world outside the Society is pugnacious and sectarian to an extent that will upset any plans that ignore these sides of it as ours did.

Though the Society may be officially affiliated to the Labor Party the true Fabian is not, and never can be, a Party man or woman. My Party, right or wrong, is not our slogan. All Fabians have their price, which is always the adoption of Fabian measures no matter by what Party. The Asquith Government tried to make use of us, and even went to the length of putting up with beer and whisky instead of wine at Beatrice Webb's dinner parties, with this in view. When the devoted diners found that Beatrice was actually making use of them very energetically, they dropped us; and Grosvenor Road knew them no more, but not before some of their best men—for instance, Lord Haldane—had been annexed by us. Liberalism being for the moment negligible (Socialism will revive it powerfully by making the regulation of leisure as pressing as the regulation of industry) the Beveridge report is quite as likely to be implemented by an Eden Cabinet as by a Stafford Cripps one, and even improved on if the Diehards are stupid enough to begin by rejecting it. In that case Mr. Eden must have our support even if our own converts on the Left denounce the Fabian Society as Public Enemy No. 1. At this moment as I write, newspapers and Parties claiming to represent the extreme Left are scheming for the utter eradication and extermination of Fascism, which means simply the Geddes axe taken out of the Tory toolchest and applied to Military Communism as after 1918, and are demanding as a stride in advance the reimprisonment of Oswald Mosley. That is to say, the professedly Socialist papers are more reactionary, and hotter on the trail of red herrings, than *The Times*, *The Observer* and *The Economist*. Mosley is none the worse for their ravings; but Herbert Morrison and Ellen Wilkinson, whose prestige is part of our own political stock-in-trade, are considerably embarrassed by them. From such idiotic truckling to what Ellen rightly calls mob hysteria the Fabians must do all they can to head the Labor Party off. When the end of the war delivers us from our present slavery to a policy of My Country, Right or Wrong, we shall have to defend all the good public work done by the Fascists and Nazis under their sub-title of National Socialists. We shall have to defend as best we can

their nationalization of trade unionism, which may bring us into serious conflict with some of the ablest of our Labor Leaders. What will Sir Walter Citrine say to it? In the U S S R, where this nationalization has been effected, Trade Unionism is much stronger than in England or the U S A; and there is more personal property and private enterprise than either of them have ever enjoyed. The Fabian Society exists, not to furnish the Labor Party or any other Party with another squad of Yesmen, but to head off the bolts of the Labor movement in the wrong direction, and keep it to its vital points.

This is by no means all I have to say; but it is all there is room for here, and quite enough to keep discussion going for the forthcoming quarter.

EDITORIAL

This is a special issue of *Fabian Quarterly* to celebrate the Diamond Jubilee of the Society. As students of politics we should analyse the influence of the Society during the 60 years of its activity and, having made our analysis, draw conclusions for the future. This Jubilee number is, therefore, devoted entirely to *Fabiana*. To preserve continuity we are, however, including our two special features—*Points for Planners* and Book Reviews.

On the morning of January 4th, the date on which 60 years ago we adopted the name *Fabian*, we received the article by George Bernard Shaw which is included in this issue, and in the evening, at a reunion attended by many members of the Society, Harold Laski delivered the address on *Fabianism and the New Age*. We do not, however, wish to give the false impression that the Society only basks in the reflected glory of heroic days; in the article on *How a Political Society Functions*, members will see one of the less-known ways in which the work is being carried on in a new guise, while Margaret Cole's article gives a general picture of the Society at work.

To be an effective instrument of political education, and to serve the Labour Movement effectively, the reader will realise that we need more funds. We, therefore, have no hesitation in appealing to members and well-wishers to send donations to the Society in celebration of its Jubilee. Few other Societies give so much to their members or have so vital a rôle to play in the struggle to create socialism. We also draw the attention of those members who are prepared to sign a covenant for seven years to the *Dartmouth Street Trustees*. This is a Trust, the terms of which are that the funds should only be used for education and research purposes. Forms of covenant can be obtained from the office.

March, 1944. O. G.

FABIANISM AND THE NEXT AGE

by Harold J. Laski

All of us know that we have reached the end of an historical period. As certainly as when the barbarians overthrew the majestic edifice of Rome, or when, with the Reformation, the middle class began slowly to climb to power; now, as unmistakably as in 1789, or 1848 or 1917, a new epoch will begin for mankind. None of us can predict its character with assurance. None of us can feel confident that the new day will not usher in a new dark age. But all of us can at least give what energy we have first to the task of ourselves understanding the time in which we live and, second, of making that understanding available to those masses who can, if we have courage enough in spirit, and audacity enough in mind, enter at long last into the possession of their heritage.

I know, of course, that there are circles in which the very existence of Fabianism seems to call for an apology. That is not a view I share. I do not think that anyone can, like myself, have reached middle age without the clear perception that this England of ours is a better England, happier in fulfilment and greater in purpose, because of Fabian achievement in these last sixty years. No group of men and women did so much as our founders to turn the England of Mr Gradgrind and Mr Bounderby into an England in which it can at least be said that privilege is on the defensive. Bernard Shaw has made his blunders: some of them, if I may say so, of Himalayan proportions; but no man in this country during the last sixty years has done more to make our people face the truth, however uncomfortable, or to expose the sham and humbug upon which aristocratic government depends. Sidney and Beatrice Webb invented a new kind of history; and it is not, I think, excessive to claim that they are the real founders of creative sociology in the modern world. Were we a people given to reverence for ideas I think the Webbs would be recognised expressly as the patron saints of the new age we may hope, if we dare greatly enough, to enter.

If we dare greatly enough—that is the test upon which all our future depends. The Fabianism of the first sixty years was conditioned to a capitalist society in which only a rare and very daring prophet—like that noblest of our comrades William Morris—could see that it contained the seeds of its own certain destruction. But the destruction will not come of itself. It will come because it can be proved to men and women that a better social order is available, that they have in their hands the power, if they will, to build it. It is because they have this power that, to me, the real test of this society will lie in what it does in the coming generation. Will it be able to measure up to that test?

Frankly, I do not know. Of the urgency of the work to be done I have no atom of doubt. We need to provide the Labour Party with a fighting body of philosophic principles. No one else can do that task; and no task is more vital. We need to apply the principles of socialism not merely, as in the days of Shaw and the Webbs, to the immediate domestic problems by

which we are confronted. We need to apply them to the difficult sphere of international relations; we need to show that they are valid when they touch the grave issues raised by our relations with the colonial peoples; and it is time—it is more than time—that we had a Fabian policy on India, for our attitude to those four hundred million Asiatic fellow-citizens of ours is the acid test of whether our socialism is a genuine faith, or merely an ersatz-religion, to be discussed, without being acted upon, in Bloomsbury and Hampstead—and in each of these spheres we need to make our colleagues in the Labour Party understand that we seek a socialist government not for the sake of power, but for the creative uses to which that power can be put when we have it.

And let us be clear that in the realm of domestic affairs the issues which the Fabian Society must tackle are of the first magnitude. We have got to unmask the multiform guises in which monopoly capitalism conceals itself and display it for the ugly and evil thing it is. We have to work out the ways and means through which the ordinary man and woman become in a real sense the citizens of a democracy, citizens in the economic and social spheres as well as the political. We must aid the trade-union movement to recover that proletarian spirit which, in men like George Lansbury, was a safeguard against the bureaucracy to which even members of the Trades Union Congress General Council can fall victims. The organisation of international trade, the government of national industries, the methods by which we can evoke, as the war is evoking, the great reservoir of talent in the masses, this is a subject-matter the full investigation of which, believe me, brooks no delay. For if it is not done by Fabians, and in the Fabian spirit, it will be done by other persons and for other purposes. We are at the cross-roads of history. The time for us to act is now.

The men and women who founded this Society had in one sense an easier, in another a more difficult task, than the one to which we are called. It was an easier task in the sense that the generation of the 'eighties felt so secure that there was hardly any ism it was not prepared to tolerate. It was a more difficult task because there were few people in that first epoch of the Society's history who believed that the masses were fitted for self-government. And that leads me to say the one thing which, of all things, I think Mrs Webb would have wished me to say. Whatever we did not know before June 22, 1941, now, at last, we can proclaim with confidence that a people can charge itself with the care of its own destiny. No function the Fabians can fulfil is more urgent or more compelling than to drive home to the man in the street the meaning, in all its fullness, of the Russian Revolution. No duty is more sacred than that of making the friendship of the two peoples as unbreakable as it can be creative. The time has come in the history of this Society for cosmopolitan thinking. Either we must go forward with speed and decision, or there will descend upon us one of those dark ages man has known so often before. I know no safeguard against the onset of a dark age as sure or as complete as Anglo-Soviet friendship. The time to build it is not when the danger has passed. The time to build it is when every man and woman in this country knows how deep our debt is to the men who made and consolidated the Russian Revolution. I do not need to remind you that it has changed the history of the world; perhaps I do need to remind some of you that it has put the principles of Fabian Socialism in a new setting and made the technique of their application very different from what the writers of *Fabian Essays* imagined it would be. There is a very special sense in which we need to relate our Fabian ideals to the supreme utterance of all socialist literature. If the workers of the world do unite, they will find that in very truth it is their chains only they have to lose. Let us bend our energies to the building of workers' unity. Then, indeed, we may hope to win the world.

THE INFLUENCE OF FABIANISM ON BRITISH SOCIAL POLICY

by William A. Robson

It is exceedingly difficult to estimate the effect which the Fabian Society has had on the political, social and economic life of Britain during the past 60 years. There are several reasons for this difficulty. One is the impossibility of separating the influence which Fabians have exerted through work done for the Society from that which they have exerted through work done in other spheres. One must, therefore, accept Sidney Webb's dictum that Fabianism comprises all the activities of all the members of the Society.

This solution is further justified by the fact that the Society as such has had practically no policy except its Basis for most of its life. For nearly 40 years practically all its publications have been issued under the signatures of their authors, in order that the Fabian Society as a whole shall not be committed to the doctrine or conclusions which they contain, although the Society would not, of course, publish material which was out of accord with its principles or method.

A more subtle and profound difficulty arises from the circumstance that some of the most potent and far-reaching work of Fabians has been directed to changing people's general ideas about society rather than to persuading them to adopt particular reforms. The Society is justly celebrated for its translation of Socialist aspirations into practical measures of economic and political policy; but it has also contributed immensely towards making the intellectual climate of Britain and the political temper of the nation what they are today. I will try to indicate some of the elements in this contribution.

Until the end of the 19th century poverty was regarded as more or less inevitable; destitution as the not unjust result of culpable human frailty; and unemployment as, in large measure, a form of malingering, from which men could be deterred by sufficiently severe treatment. Sixty years of Fabian discussion have convinced the great majority of people that poverty is due to what Tawney called the sickness of an acquisitive society; that destitution is the result of defective social organisation; and hat unemployment was properly described by Beveridge in his book on the subject as a disease of industry.

The identification of wealth with virtue which prevailed in the Victorian era has been shattered no less effectively. Indeed, a presumption of social iniquity has been raised against the possessors of great wealth which places the onus of disproof on them. Some seek to discharge the burden of social immorality by charitable gifts on a vast scale; others by handing over their estates to the National Trust; while the owners of coal royalties were finally relieved of their embarrassment by a Conservative Government. These are mere straws in the wind, but two important facets of public opinion must be attributed in large part to the erosion of belief caused by such works as the Webbs' *Decay of Capitalist Civilisation* and Shaw's *Socialism for Millionaires.*

One is that the owners and entrepreneurs of industry, apart from Sir Ernest Benn and a few other amusing remnants of the old guard, have ceased to believe with true conviction in the capitalist system. The other is that ambition for wealth among the young has declined in a remarkable degree. Young men and women today demand decent standards of life and adequate security as never before; but they are much keener to obtain work which is intrinsically interesting and socially useful than to devote themselves to the mere acquisition of wealth.

Fabianism is responsible, to a quite special extent, for the rational atmosphere in which it is possible to discuss in Britain today the great political, social and economic issues which confront the nation. From the time of its foundation the Society has invariably insisted on a rational approach and on toleration of opposing views. It was, indeed, the first organised group to appreciate the value of facts as political weapons. *Facts for Socialists*, which first appeared in 1887, set the keynote of Fabian methods. Since then there has poured forth a constant stream of Fabian publications in which the case for Socialism, supported by a mass of factual material, has been put forward by writers whose opinions might be opposed, but whose facts could stand the closest scrutiny.

The work of the Fabians merges with the spectacular rise of the social sciences during the past quarter of a century. Booth's great enquiry into the Life and Labour of London, and its successor 40 years later, Rowntree's investigation into poverty in York, the founding and development of the London School of Economics and Political Science, the enquiries conducted by the Fabian Society, the volumes of the Royal Commission on the Poor Law—these are strands in a single thread; and Fabians can justly claim a large share in the whole movement. Today, the Social Survey is a firmly established instrument of public knowledge, and statisticians and economists are highly prized by Government Departments; but when *Facts for Londoners* appeared as Tract No 8 the Fabian Society was blazing a trail through a virgin forest. To that tract we owe the admirable annual volume of *London Statistics* which the L C C publishes.

The atmosphere in which Fabian disputation is conducted is described in Tract No 70 (1896) as follows: 'The Fabian Society strenuously maintains its freedom of thought and speech with regard to the errors of Socialist authors, economists, leaders, and parties, no less than to those of its opponents. For instance, it insists on maintaining as critical an atttiude towards Marx and Lassalle, some of whose views must by this time be discarded as erroneous or obsolete, as these eminent Socialists themselves maintained towards their predecessors, St Simon and Robert Owen.' In a later passage the Society declares that in the natural philosophy of Socialism, light is a more important factor than heat. A tribute to the influence of the Society in using research methods for political purposes was contained in an article which appeared in *The Observer* on 26 December, 1943, by its Parliamentary Correspondent. This was headed 'Tories Take a Leaf from the Fabian Book'. The opening paragraph was as follows: 'More significant than anything else at Westminster during the past year has been the way in which the Conservative Party has taken leaves from the Fabian book. Political research has become the hobby of the politician who formerly guided himself by "ordinary common sense", or, more simply, by the Party Whip. The effect has been nothing but good.'

We may now consider the influence of the Society in specific fields of policy. Here it is admittedly difficult to trace the effect on legislation and administration of the support or opposition which Fabians have manifested towards principles or institutions. But broadly speaking, Fabianism has led to a widespread understanding of, and support for, the following groups of principles and the policies associated therewith :

SOCIALISATION

First, there is the principle of Socialisation of particular industries or services which are ripe for such treatment. To understand the Fabian influence in this field we must go back to the early days of the Society when it advocated the municipal ownership of public utilities. The Fabians did not originate this policy, for many cities had owned their gas and water services since the middle of the 19th century, or earlier. But whereas Joseph Chamberlain advocated municipal trading in Birmingham as a method of enabling the ratepayers to make profits out of public utility services and thereby save their own pockets, the Fabians showed that the true purpose of municipal ownership was to enable the community to provide itself with essential services in the most efficient way at the lowest cost. They argued, further, that no profit should be made from such undertakings; any surplus should be disposed of by lowering the charges to the consumer or improving the service.

This theory and practice is today recognised as the correct one, and is followed generally by local authorities. A small profit or loss may be made here and there, but taking the country as whole municipal trading is conducted on Fabian lines.

The broader effects of ' gas and water socialism ', as it was called, were much more profound and far-reaching. This phrase was used as a term of abuse by Socialists of the idealistic and Utopian schools who regarded the Fabian preoccupation with such pedestrian matters as gas and water, refuse collection and sewage disposal, as beneath contempt.

The Fabians themselves, however, were content to formulate demands for the public ownership of particular services and to refrain from sweeping generalisations covering the whole field of industry, commerce or agriculture. The Basis of the Society is a statement of general objectives; but what Fabians have usually advocated has been the municipalisation of the milk supply or of slaughterhouses, hospitals, pawnshops, bakeries, or steamboats; and the national ownership of the mines, railways, canals, telegraphs, telephones and so forth. This habit of arguing for the socialisation of each industry or service on its merits has appealed to the empirical habits of thought of the British people. It has also from time to time induced the opponents of Fabianism to accept socialisation proposals relating to a particular industry without feeling that they had conceded the general principle. For example, the Bill setting up the London Passenger Transport Board was introduced by a Labour Minister of Transport—Mr Herbert Morrison, a Fabian—and piloted through its subsequent stages by his Liberal and Conservative successors in office.

The emphasis on gas and water in early Fabian Socialism was not a very happy one, so far as English municipal life was concerned. Local government was only beginning to emerge from the narrow and cramping ideas in which it had been swathed by its Victorian progenitors, who regarded the provision of drainage and the disposal of sewage as the highest achievements to which civic life should aspire. But from the standpoint of the general development of Fabian thought, it had two important and beneficial consequences.

First, it provided an immediate objective of modest dimensions which could be, and often was, attained in particular areas without insuperable difficulties. The tide was running swiftly in the direction of municipal trading by the end of the century, especially in the case of water, tramways, electricity and, to a lesser extent, gas supply. Each local success brought encouragement to the Fabians' cause.

From this mustard seed of gas and water socialism there sprang a forest of imposing proposals for socialisation on a national scale. Included among them are schemes for the nationalisation of transport, the coal industry, insurance and banking; and the municipalisation of the several services

mentioned above. I do not think it is claiming too much for the Fabian Society to assert that most of the social control or public ownership which has taken place in respect of such enterprises as the London Docks, London Passenger Transport, the generation of electricity, the telephone service, and afforestation during the past 40 years has been largely due, directly or indirectly, to Fabian doctrine.

PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

The second important aspect of the gas-and-water phase was that it directed attention to the possibilities of action through local authorities rather than Central Departments. Fabians have never been enamoured of *étatisme* in the strict sense of the term. They have always favoured the evolution of what the Webbs called a multiform democracy. Their early interest in municipal trading was the beginning of an intensive appreciation of local government over the entire field of its activity. It led to those studies of public service boards which in 1937 appeared under the title of *Public Enterprise*, and to the many tracts on regionalism which the Society has published.

The tracts issued by the Society showing the powers and potentialities of the various types of local authorities have been widely used by newly elected progressive members of such bodies. The number of Fabians on local bodies—many of them in positions of importance—is large and continually increasing. In the case of the greatest of all, the London County Council, more than one-fifth of the entire body are at present members of the Society, including both the Chairman and Leader.

The civil service has also claimed the frequent attention of Fabians. The need for decentralisation of government, for a diversity of administrative forms and an efficient public service, has been an important element in Fabian thought which has exercised a wide influence on public opinion.

Again, the bold assertion by Fabians that what Britain needs is not less government but more, has become generally accepted in practice by all political parties, whatever they may say about it in theory. Some of the opponents of Labour are agitated at the thought that it may be necessary to continue war-time controls for a time after the end of hostilities, but this does not invalidate the general truth of my statement. The period between 1919 and 1943 has seen the creation of no less than 14 new Government Departments exercising new or extended functions. This is a record number, and they have all been set up by Conservative Governments or Coalitions in which Conservatives and Liberals predominated. Neither of the two Labour Governments created any new Departments.

The negative side of the Fabian belief in more and better government was the Society's disapproval of anarchism. In the 1880's there was a distinct group of Communist Anarchists in Britain, led by men of high repute and integrity, such as Prince Kropotkin. The Fabian Fathers gave this movement its *coup de grâce* and it has never been heard of since.

TRADE UNIONISM

The multiform democracy idea, even before it was fully conceived or explicitly formulated, led the Fabian Society to champion, continually and consistently, Trade Unionism on the one hand and the Cooperative Movement on the other. In the early days of the Society Trade Unions were still regarded by the middle classes in no small degree as 'those fearful engines of destruction' of which Dr Arnold had been so afraid. To what other body than the Fabian Society, and to what other thinkers than the Webbs, the Coles, C. M. Lloyd and other Fabians, do Trade Unions owe in comparable degree the

universal recognition of their value, and the enhanced prestige, power and status which they enjoy today? The whole complex of ideas which the Webbs showed to be associated with Trade Unionism, such as the common rule, have entered the national consciousness and are scarcely questioned today in any responsible quarter. Nor was Fabian influence, in this field especially, confined to Britain. Would Trade Unions occupy the position they do in the Soviet Union if Lenin had not been deeply impressed by *The History of Trade Unionism*, which he translated into Russian?

THE COOPERATIVE MOVEMENT

The other great pillar of Socialism to which Fabianism gave constant support was the Consumers' Cooperative Movement. Here again the Society was not the inventor but the guide, philosopher and friend of the movement. It was Beatrice Webb, Leonard Woolf and other Fabians who first interpreted Cooperation, and accorded it a proper place in the Socialist Commonwealth, as a method of organising man as consumer. The Society has published a great many tracts on Cooperation, and it is probably largely due to its influence that the Cooperative Movement is politically united with the Labour Party.

On the negative side, leading Fabians were strongly opposed to Guild Socialism and any form of Producers' Cooperation. Little is heard today of these insurgent movements which attracted considerable political interest and sympathy 30 years ago, although G. D. H. Cole, the chief exponent of Guild Socialism, retains his belief in the doctrine. The Fabian Society was chiefly responsible on the intellectual plane for the decline of these theories, although the failure of the Building Guilds after the last war contributed something by way of practical demonstration. Fabians were also unsympathetic to copartnership and the various forms of profit-sharing on the ground that they contributed little to the alleviation of the essential defects in the economic order.

THE NATIONAL MINIMUM

The most influential of all the doctrines which the Fabian Society has promulgated is probably the idea of the National Minimum. This doctrine, stated in its simplest terms, declares that the nation must insist on the maintenance by the Central Government of a minimum standard of living below which no person shall be permitted to fall. This minimum standard is not the same for everyone. It varies according to needs and therefore may depend on age, sex, and condition. It will differentiate between the sick and the healthy, between the able-bodied unemployed and the aged, and so forth.

Fabian writers and speakers have not usually put forward the principle of a national minimum standard in its generalised and philosophic form. They have tended to argue rather in terms of particular applications, of which the most ambitious was 'a minimum wage sufficient to maintain labourers and their families in reasonable health and efficiency' (Tract No 70—Report on Fabian Policy). The practical outcome of this particular demand was the Trade Board legislation of 1909 and 1918 and the Agricultural Wages Act, 1924. The Society also played a prominent part in making Government Departments and Local Authorities pay Trade Union rates to their employees, and also in securing the insertion of the Fair Wages Clause in public contracts.

Many other applications of the Minimum Standard principle were evolved by the Society at various times. The extension of the school meals system (proposed by Mrs Drake in *Starvation in the Midst of Plenty*—Tract No 240, 1933) and Dr Somerville Hastings' plea for a national physiological minimum diet to eliminate malnutrition, are examples drawn from a field in which great progress has been made during the present war. The national minimum of

leisure found expression in Fabian support of proposals for the adoption of the Eight Hours day as long ago as 1896. Improved standards of housing were strenuously urged by the Society long before the great State-aided and municipally organised housing drive began at the end of the last war. Higher national standards of education, with a raising of the school-leaving age and improved provision of elementary, secondary and technical education has been a continual feature of Fabian policy.

In all these spheres—wages, hours, housing, education and food—the work of the Society has borne practical results in terms of legislation or administration. Its main contentions are no longer contested on grounds of principle; and opponents confine their arguments to the question of how fast or how slowly the aims can be realised. It is true that many other organisations and sources of opinion have joined in the struggle; but no other Society, group or institution can show a comparable record of continuous effort based on a comprehensive social philosophy. It is for this reason that the Fabian Society can reasonably claim to have been the chief source of inspiration for the practical changes in public policy which have occurred in the last 20 years.

A NATIONAL MEDICAL SERVICE

A sphere in which the pioneering work of Fabians is particularly relevant to present-day reforms is public health. 'It is clear,' wrote Lawson Dodd in *A National Medical Service* (Tract No 160, 1911), 'that a coordinated State Service of medicine, in its widest aspect, is the only solution that offers itself to the student of sociology as in any way satisfactory, whether from the standpoint of the doctor or of the patient. . . . A growing sense of social justice will demand that the best medical service be placed within the reach of all.' This view became Assumption B of the Beveridge Report and has been adopted by the Government in its new national health service plan. But a revolutionary change in an essential service did not become an 'assumption' even to Sir William Beveridge overnight; and it would be interesting to know if he—or the public—is aware of the origin of the idea of a National Medical Service.

POOR LAW REFORM

The simplest and most straightforward example of Fabian influence on social policy is the break-up of the Poor Law. That, as all the world knows, was the direct result of the Minority Report of the Poor Law Commission and the subsequent propaganda work of the National Committee to Promote the Break-up of the Poor Law. The Report was, of course, the work of the Webbs, but as Pease records in his History, 'the Society took it up', reprinted a cheap edition, and generally lent its full weight to spreading knowledge of the recommendations and their merits.

Nineteen years later, Mr Chamberlain's Local Government Act, 1929, abolished the Boards of Guardians, transferred their functions to county and county borough councils, and authorised them to declare that services which could be provided either under the Poor Law or under a social service statute should be deemed to be provided exclusively under the latter. The term Poor Law was replaced by Public Assistance, and in some cases Social Welfare.

This clear-cut connection between cause and effect has obscured two other features of the Report of probably greater importance. One was the proposal, worked out in considerable detail, to establish the Ministry of Labour and the Employment Exchange system. The other was the idea of a public works policy by which the State can stimulate economic activity and hasten recovery in time of depression. This is now part of the stock in trade of all parties, and of economists of all schools of thought, in Britain and many other countries.

The Fabian Society has often shown prescience in directing attention to problems that would not otherwise have penetrated the consciousness of the public until many years afterwards, and to that of Governments still later. For instance, in 1886 it published a book on Government Organisation of Unemployed Labour, the Report of a Fabian Committee. Three years later Tract No 9 by Sidney Webb dealt with an 8 hours day. A still more striking case is that of the falling birth-rate. So long ago as 1905 the Society conducted an inquiry among its married members (so arranged as to preserve anonymity) as to the practice of birth control. The results were published in *The Times* and afterwards as a tract by Webb, No 131. Similarly, the economic and cultural effects of the increasing age content of the population were first dealt with in Tract No 246 by Emil Davies.

In this article it has only been possible to describe briefly the leading themes in which Fabian policy has been expressed. It has not been possible in the available space to indicate the many variations on those themes, or to deal with the impact of Fabianism on Colonial and International affairs. In both these spheres the work of the Society has been growing in recent years and its influence increasingly marked.

I hope I have succeeded in showing that the Fabian Society has had a profound effect on the course of public affairs during the past half-century. The political and economic ideas of the British people, no less than the spirit with which they contemplate the future and the mood in which they discuss the problems of the day, would be very different from what they are if this unique fellowship of Fabian thought had never existed.

THE SHAW—WELLS CONTROVERSY OF 1904-1908

A Chapter of Fabian History

by F. E. Loewenstein

We made history in this fashion until, in the course of nature, we young upstarts became an Old Gang, and were assailed furiously as such by a very gifted recruit ten years younger, by name H. G. Wells. But the Society, though keenly interested in him, would not throw us over for him; and he shook our dust from his feet, and withdrew with all his guns in action and more popular in the Society than ever.'[1]

Here is the story of this struggle for the mastery of the Fabian Society which was a mere incident in Wells' life but marked the zenith of Shaw's Fabian career, quite apart from the great influence it had on the development of the Society, which in 1903 had only a membership of 775.

It all started at the 'Coefficients', a club founded in 1902 by Mrs. Webb as a result of the Boer War controversy to study Empire Problems. Wells was one of its first members. At the beginning of 1903 he joined the I L P, and the Webbs persuaded him to apply to join the Fabian Society, to which he was proposed by Graham Wallas and Bernard Shaw. In 1903 Wells had already published about twenty books and was considered a coming man, Shaw had then nineteen years of service in the Fabian Society to his credit and was a noted playwright (though the Royal Court season was still in the future). Wells was 37, Shaw 47.

That is all we need to know about the two antagonists; the players are introduced and the stage is set for what Shaw was later (in 1942) to call ' this glorious episode in the history of the Society,' and Wells (in 1934) ' a confused, tedious, ill-conceived and ineffectual campaign to turn the little Fabian Society, wizened already though not old, into the beginning of an order, akin to these Samurai in *A Modern Utopia*, which should embody for mankind a sense of the State . . . No part of my career rankles so acutely in my memory with the conviction of bad judgment, gusty impulse and inexcusable vanity, as that storm in the Fabian tea-cup.' Such are the memories of the victor and the vanquished.

ENTER H. G. WELLS

Shortly after joining, H. G. gave his first lecture to the Society on *The Question of Scientific Administrative Areas in relation to Municipal Undertakings.* In this lecture he described himself as a Socialist ' who regards the abolition of inheritance and the intelligent taxation of property for services to the community as remedies for existing evils '. The lecture made no great impression. Pease supplies this comment: ' as a lecture it was by no means a success, because Wells read his paper in a low monotonous voice, addressed to a corner of the hall '. The speech did not appear as a Fabian Tract, but Wells himself published it in the same year as an Appendix to *Mankind in the Making.*

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[1] G. B. S. in the *Tribune*, May 28th, 1943.

The next we hear of Wells in connection with the Society is that he intended to resign. In March 1904 he wrote to this effect to the Secretary, giving as one reason that he was giving up his flat in London, and as another that he was by no means in sympathy with the attitude adopted by the Society towards various contemporary political issues. Neither the matter nor the manner of the recent Tract on Free Trade, for example, were to his taste. If he were able to attend meetings with any regularity, he stated, he would do his best to *establish his views and methods against the prevailing influence.* The Tract referred to, *Fabianism and The Fiscal Question : An Alternative Policy*, had been drafted by Shaw, but before its issue had been submitted, as usual, to the whole body of members, ' and reduced here and expanded there to their greatest common measure '. Wells' objection was shared by Graham Wallas who actually withdrew from the Society. Asked not to resign, H. G. finally declared that he had not the heart to hold out against the remonstrances of the Executive. Though disapproving highly of the Fabian Society, he withdrew his resignation and was soon appointed a member of the Local Government Information Bureau.

Between 1904 and 1906 Wells published *A Modern Utopia*, *Kipps* and *In the Days of the Comet.* Shaw composed in 1905 *Major Barbara* and had it produced at the ' Royal Court '. We now come to 1906 when for January 12th, a meeting was convened to consider a paper by Wells on *Faults of the Fabian.* Owing to the General Election, however, arrangements were altered, and Wells read instead the greater part of his *This Misery of Boots*, which had been published in the *Independent Review* in December 1905. He prefaced his paper with some critical remarks on Fabian Tracts for which a new form was desirable. They should be moving and lucid, of a type likely to attract the intelligent clerk. They should be written so as to appeal to the unconverted. There should be a series of such Tracts, for example, on Landlords and Rates, for the ratepayer, one on children appealing to the intelligent woman, another on unemployment.

Wells handed to the Society the cheque he received for his article, and also presented the Society with the Copyright. Publication as a special Fabian pamphlet only took place in 1907. Wells blamed the Publication Committee for the delay and not without reason. They wanted to do something memorable and had the cover relettered, redrawn and rearranged. At one stage the title could be read as *This Misery of Wells by H. G. Boots.* The little booklet which came out eventually does really stand out as a bright spot among the dreary looking Tracts of the time. It admirably fulfilled all the conditions Wells had put forward. It still sells, as it is one of the finest pieces of propaganda ever published by the Society.

FABIAN TACTICS

On February 9th, 1906, the postponed lecture on *Faults of the Fabian* took place. It is interesting to note that this paper was written before the outcome of the General Election was known, with the remarkable success achieved by the Labour Representation Committee which had only been in existence since 1900. Of the fifty candidates they put into the field twenty-nine were successful. Of the new M P s seven were Fabians, four being elected on the Liberal and three on the Labour ticket. Wells evidently had an inkling of what was going to happen, and felt that the time had come for a vigorous Socialist attack. In his speech he asked the Society to go all out for a membership of 10,000 within a year or so. The speech culminated in the challenge, ' Make socialists and you will achieve socialism, there is no other way '. ' How does this little dribble of activities look,' he exclaimed, ' when you come out of the underground apartments in Clement's Inn into the Strand with its buildings and business places, the glare of the advertisements, the abundance of traffic and the multitude of people, in

short, into the World whose very foundations you are attempting to change?' The use of the words 'T fable' in the speech gave George Standring, the well-known printer of the Society, whose sympathies were on the side of the 'Old Gang', the idea to write a little fable in Æsopian manner, entitled *Fables for Fablians No. X—The Frog*. This frog sallying forth from his basement into the Strand meditates on what Wells had said about this thoroughfare. 'And his heart became heavy within him; and he said, Lo, I must megalo!' And he 'increased by patient and persevering inhalation of air. And busted.' The moral, attached to the fable, reads: 'All's Well that ends Wells.'—The battle was joined.

At the close of the discussion on the lecture, Wells succeeded in getting it printed by the Society, and it was circulated to members marked 'Private. For Members Only'. By a unanimous vote the Executive was instructed 'to appoint a committee (consisting of members and non-members of the Executive) to consider what measures should be taken to increase the scope, influence, income and activity of the Society', the election for the Executive (due in April) and the Annual General Meeting (due in May) were postponed until the report had been presented, and were then to take place in reverse order.

Wells insisted that the Committee should be small and that he himself should be empowered to nominate its members. After lengthy discussions the Executive fell in with his wishes. Geoffrey West, in his book on Wells, has rightly pointed out that this was a blunder, as it exposed the Special Committee to attack as being neither representative nor impartial. Wells selected ten members who were willing to serve. Pease declined, as the Executive did not wish him to go on the Committee. Standring and Cecil Chesterton also declined because they felt that the Executive had better either be frankly excluded or fully represented. It is possible that Wells tried to safeguard himself against such an attack by choosing from the members of the Executive the Rev. Stewart D. Headlam (intimate friend of Shaw's) and Mrs. Shaw. The third member of the Executive, G. R. S. Taylor was afterwards the only one of the three who did not also sign the counter report of the Executive. The other members of the Committee were Dr. Stanton Coit, W. A. Colegate, Dr. L. Haden Guest, Sydney Olivier, Mrs. W. P. Reeves, H. G., and Mrs. Wells who acted as Secretary. The first meeting was held on February 28th, 1906. At a meeting in March, Wells moved that the proceedings and Agenda of the Committee were confidential and not to be communicated to outsiders. The deliberations of the Committee may appear to have taken quite a long time but this was not in fact the case as only occasional meetings were held from the beginning of May until the beginning of September, Wells having gone to America on a lecture tour. Evidence was given by Pease on the decadence of Fabian local groups, and the Rev. S. D. Headlam explained to the Committee the group organisation of the Guild of St. Matthew. A memorandum on the redrafting of the *Basis*[1] was presented to the Executive at a combined meeting of the two Committees.

THE EXECUTIVE TAKE A LINE

In the meantime the Executive had stolen some of the thunder by the immediate adoption of Wells' suggestion to constitute a new class of Associates and by granting permission to form a Fabian Nursery. On October 3rd, 1906, the Committee announced that their report was ready and represented their unanimous opinion.

[1] This was a statement of the aims and objects of the Society first adopted in 1887 and finally merged into the Rules at the amalgamation with the N.F.R.B. in 1939.

Let us now look at the Committee's more controversial proposals and the reception they met with from the Executive.

To make *Fabian News* a weekly paper, appealing to outside readers. Rejected 8 : 3.

To change the Society's name to British Socialist Party. Unanimously rejected.

(N.B.—This was a point on which members of the Committee declared that they did not wish to divide the Society.)

To revise the *Basis*. Rejected by 6 : 5. (!)

To change the Society's political policy. No resolution. Shaw (who had been asked to draft a counter report) preferring to put forward his proposals on this point without specific instructions.

The passages in the Committee's proposed new *Basis* most strongly objected to were :

(*a*) That the purpose of the Society is to forward the progress of Socialism *by all available means.*

(*b*) That Socialism denies any private right of property whatever in human beings.

(*c*) That public authority be substituted for private authority in the education and support of the young.

(*d*) That independent Parliamentary action is a vital part of Socialist action.

A further point: ' To promote the establishing of equal citizenship of men and women ' was not attacked in the counter report as in the meantime the women members, headed by Mrs. Pember Reeves, had succeeded (threatening they would otherwise vote for the Wells report) in getting the Executive to promise to accept this proposal. As a matter of fact, the inclusion of this declaration was the *only* alteration made in the *Basis*, which otherwise remained unchanged until 1919.

What was the proposed change in political policy ? The Committee wanted the Society to run their own candidates in cooperation with other Socialist and Labour bodies and to raise a fund for this purpose. The Society, at the same time, was to continue loyal cooperation with the Labour Party in Parliament, and to endeavour to hasten the time when that Labour Party would declare for unrestricted Socialism.

Shaw in his answer pointed out that ' the Special Fabian Election Fund and Campaign may mean breaking away from the Labour Party and throwing it into an open party conflict with the middle-class Socialists '. He doubted whether the Committee had recognised this danger, but followed up this reprimand with the confession that he was quite prepared for a new departure in the direction of getting Fabians into parliament as Fabians, especially such candidates as ' find themselves at present heavily handicapped by having no party. They are "Independents"; and as Independents have to fight elections on their personal credentials alone—that is, on their personal acquaintance and popularity—they are generally defeated. Consequently the middle-class Socialist is forced, as a matter of tactics, to run either as a Labour candidate, a Liberal candidate, or a Tory Democrat. As a Labour candidate, he loses middle and upper class votes which logically belong to him, besides making it very difficult for the representatives of the Trade Unions on the selection committee to consent to his adoption, as they naturally prefer to be represented by one of their own class. As a Liberal or Tory Democrat he is sailing under false colours, and making it impossible for himself to be really independent of the party whip. This situation is an intolerable one.'

WELLS IS LANDED

A number of meetings were held to discuss the two reports. Wells acted as spokesman for the Reformers and Shaw led for the Executive. Wells issued a

special pamphlet which he circularised among the members under the title *Reconstruction of the Fabian Society*. He again emphasised the need for internal reconstruction, for a new *Basis* and for political activity. He denied that the running of candidates by the Society would antagonise the I L P as Fabians would fight a rather different type of constituency. He affirmed his belief in close cooperation with the Labour Party and ridiculed the idea that a new Socialist party was needed in Parliament, because *it existed already*, represented by the I L P. He somewhat qualified this statement later on by saying, ' the left-wing, at any rate, of the coming great Socialist Party exists, teaching better Socialism than we teach in our *Basis*. It is a childish quibble to deny it. Keir Hardie is its leader, and our business now as things are is to line up loyally with him '. On December 14th, Shaw replied for the Executive to the whole debate and by his superb craftsmanship as a public speaker and by exploiting blunders Wells had made, succeeded in defeating him and the report of the Committee. He said that Wells ' had contrived to cut down the bridges behind both himself and the Executive so completely that there was nothing for it now but annihilation of the present Executive or " unconditional surrender " by Mr. Wells '. There are different opinions as to the white or black magic Shaw used to ensure that *not one* vote was cast for Wells that evening. This is S. G. Hobson's ' choice ': ' At the final meeting Shaw blew up the wearisome business with a characteristic joke. " Ladies and gentlemen," he said, " Mr. Wells in his speech complained of the long delay by the ' Old Gang ' in replying to his report. But we took no longer than he. During his Committee's deliberations he produced a book on America. And a very good book too. But whilst I was drafting our reply I produced a play." Here he paused, his eyes vacantly glancing round the ceiling. It really seemed that he had lost his train of thought. When we were all thoroughly uncomfortable, he resumed : " Ladies and gentlemen: I paused there to enable Mr. Wells to say: ' And a very good play too ! '." We got no farther. We laughed, and went on laughing. Shaw always has been an adept at the unexpected; never did he put his gift to such practical purpose. He stood on the platform waiting. Wells, also on the platform, smiled self-consciously ; but the audience went on laughing. Finally, when we were too exhausted to laugh longer, Wells withdrew his amendment and we all went trooping out in search of refreshment. Keats was snuffed out by an article; Wells was squelched by a joke.'[1]

MODUS VIVENDI

Wells' answer came in a letter published in *Fabian News* in which he said that he was reluctantly taking up a secondary position for a time in the campaign for an effectual reform of the Society's constitution. It must not be forgotten that by then Wells had already succeeded in getting the rules altered in order to increase the number of Executive members to 21, the three standing sub-committees for which he had asked were formed, the long overdue reform of the provisions governing the election of new members was effected, and the formation of groups for special subjects initiated. At the A G M in February it was decided on the motion of Sydney Olivier that a committee should be appointed to submit a revised statement of the *Basis* and aims of the Society. This Committee was formed but no report was ever issued. On March 8th, a resolution ' to appoint a Special Committee to inquire into and to report upon the best means of promoting local Socialist Societies of the Fabian type, with the object of increasing the Socialist representation in Parliament as a party cooperating as far as possible with the Labour Party, while remaining independent of that and all other parties ', was proposed by the Executive and passed.

[1] S. G. Hobson *Pilgrim to the Left*, London, 1938, pp. 106–107.

In the following election for the Executive nearly 80% of the members voted (in 1905 only 39% had voted), the list was headed by Sidney Webb with 819 votes, Pease with 809, G. B. S. with 781 and Wells with 717. Of the members who stood for re-election the Executive lost only Cecil Chesterton, but succeeded in getting in Granville-Barker and Miss Millicent Murby. Nine members were elected on the other ticket, under the slogan: 'Vote for the "Spirit and Purport" of the New Movement. For 20th Century Socialism.'

The new Executive quickly settled down to work, Wells having been appointed both to the General Purposes and the Propaganda Sub-Committees. He was also a member of the Special Committee, of whose fourteen members (chairman Sidney Webb) this time only three were non-members of the Executive. This committee presented a report in November 1907, which was printed and submitted to the members without comment. It recommended the promotion of local Fabian Societies, but on the main business of Socialist Representation in Parliament it came only to the tame conclusion that increased Socialist Representation, so far as its own members were concerned, would mean the raising of a Parliamentary Fund of at least £5,000, and that in order to test the willingness of members to contribute to such a Fund, all the members should be asked their views and the amount they would be prepared to contribute. At a meeting on January 4th, 1908, these recommendations were adopted.

In May 1908 H. G. was again elected as a member of the Executive and Mrs. Wells also succeeded in gaining a seat which she retained until March 1910. Wells resigned in September 1908 not without having taken part earlier in the same year in the third Annual Conference of local Fabian Societies and Groups at which 61 delegates representing 36 Groups and Societies met for a whole-day conference. (Membership 1908 : 2,462, not counting Members of local Fabian Societies and Associates, total number over 3,000.)

Wells having achieved most of what he had set out to achieve except complete mastery, soon tired of the drudgery of committee work and of the necessity to make compromises—or, to give his own words from the letter of resignation,—'I have had it in my mind that I might presently take part in a vigorous campaign for a revised *Basis* and a revived Propaganda. But when I calculate the forces against such a campaign, the inevitable opposition and irritation that must ensue and the probable net results of what would certainly be an irksome and distressful conflict, I am forced to conclude that the effort is, for me at least, not worth making'. And Shaw, about ten years later, agrees with him, 'In a way he was fundamentally right in seeing that he could do nothing unless the Society would definitely accept him and trust him, and get rid of us. God only knows whether the Society had not better have done it. The "Old Gang" could have carried on somehow, somewhere, all right

THE WORK OF THE FABIAN SOCIETY TODAY

by Margaret Cole

The present state of the sixty-year-old Fabian Society is the result of a revival which began in the spring of 1939, only a very few months before the outbreak of war, when the comparatively infant New Fabian Research Bureau—it was barely eight years old—amalgamated with a venerable but somewhat somnolent body which bore the name first devised in 1884 and migrated to the elder's home in Dartmouth Street. With its eight hundred or so enthusiastic and youngish members—assisted by a good many from the Fabian Society proper, including the present Treasurer—and under the ægis of the new President, Beatrice Webb, it set about shaking the old body into a consciousness that its rôle in the development of British society was not over, and that the need for Fabian principles, Fabian policy, and Fabian Research was no less vital in the world of today than it was in the world of Gladstone.

THE SOCIETY IN PERSPECTIVE

Let us begin with a few facts. The Fabian Society is, since the dissolution of the Social-Democratic Federation, the oldest Socialist Society in this country; it is older than the Labour Party, which it helped to form, and older than the I L P, to whose original roll it made a not inconsiderable contribution. In its earlier history it had two peaks of membership, the first in 1892, just before the formation of the I L P, the second in 1912–13, which was the period of violent radical and labour unrest preceding the first world war. Today we have a third high level—I will not call it a peak, because we do not believe that the summit has yet been reached.

Numerically speaking, these 'peaks' are not very impressive. In 1892 there were a trifle over three thousand members, most of them subscribing to local Fabian Societies only; in 1913 three or four hundred more, with a considerably higher proportion of National members. In both years the figures are no more than an approximation, because the central office had no means of checking the membership of provincial societies. For 1944 we can be rather more definite. The Society collects, nationally, close upon 4,000 subscriptions—an increase of 50% in the last two years. The vast majority of these subscriptions come from individuals, but 110 are paid by Divisional Labour Parties, Cooperative Societies, and Trade Union branches. In addition, there are—or were at the time this article was written—56 local societies, with a known membership of 1,000, and a possible 400–500 more belonging to societies which have not yet made returns under the new rule. The Society runs four regular periodicals; two, the sadly-truncated *Fabian News* and the *Fabian Quarterly* of research and reviews, go to all members, the other two, *Empire* and *France and Britain*, to those who are interested in the subjects with which they deal.

FABIAN ACTIVITIES

The Fabian Society of today, thus, is larger, but not a very great deal larger than the Fabian Society of fifty or thirty years ago. What a *revenant*

from 1892 or 1912, who knew nothing of the intervening years, would notice rather than the increase in membership, would be the increase in activity, particularly in ' solid ' publications, and above all in the size of the permanent staff, paid or half-paid.

In the case of publications, numerical comparison is not possible; but consider the actual output. Since the date of the amalgamation, i.e., in less than five years, the Fabian Society has either published on its own or sponsored 14 Tracts, 40 Research pamphlets, 2 important pieces of ' Evidence ', 13 propaganda pamphlets and ' specials ', 3 booklets, priced from 1/6 to 2/6, and 15 books, viz.: five volumes of *Autumn Lectures; Evacuation Survey* (ed R. S. Padley and Margaret Cole); *The Unemployment Services* (Polly Hill); *Hitler's Route to Bagdad; Britain's Food Supplies in Peace and War* (Charles Smith); *War Over West Ham* (Doreen Idle); *Retail Trade Associations* (Hermann Levy); *Social Security* (ed W. A. Robson); *Our Soviet Ally* (ed Margaret Cole); *When Hostilities Cease; Commodity Control* (Lamartine Yates). This in spite of the growing difficulties of paper supply, which has caused those responsible to scrutinise with increasing care every suggestion for publication. At the same time time-honoured activities like the Autumn Lectures and the Summer School (which dates from 1907) have been continued without a break even during the blitz, and many new ones have been added. Of these may be mentioned Christmas and Easter Schools, weekend conferences—all these, alas, now severely curtailed not by lack of demand but by lack of accommodation—day conferences in London and elsewhere, the monthly lunches, evening and afternoon gatherings of various kinds, including a very recent development, the Fabian Parliamentary Forum, a regular meeting of Labour Members of Parliament at which speakers supplied by the Society explain and discuss questions of immediate importance; G. D. H. Cole, for example, gave a talk on Full Employment, R. H. Tawney on the Bill for Educational Reconstruction, and Dr. Stark Murray on the White Paper on ' A National Service for Health '.

The interest aroused by all these activities is reflected *inter alia* in an increase in the turnover of the Fabian Bookshop of about 900% since 1939, in the much greater use made of the small Fabian Library (which has been severely purged of obsolete books), and in the stream of questions, some calling for highly expert knowledge, which flows in continually, no matter how loudly we protest that we are a research and propaganda body, not an information bureau.

THE ORGANISATION OF POLITICAL RESEARCH

And this brings me to the question of staff. The work of the Society is enormously more expensive, in terms of human labour and therefore ultimately of cash, than it was a generation ago. For this there are two main reasons. First, the leisure time of the type of member who did the work of the Society in the nineteen-hundreds has greatly decreased. In former times, the Executive could meet twice in the week for long sessions; in former times its members, and other leading personalities of the Society, could be sent letters of enquiry to be answered in their own hands out of their own knowledge; above all, in former times there was a steady stream of young men and women just fresh from the university or elsewhere, who were ready and eager to put in a period of time doing odd jobs, office or organising work for the Fabian Society, while they looked around before settling on their own careers.

None of this is true today. The members of the Executive and the experts, much as many of them do to help in the work, are far too busy, especially during wartime, to attend frequent long meetings or to write detailed answers to questions; nor can the young afford, in the modern scramble, to hang around waiting for the right job to turn up, they must start to earn right away. This means that

we have, nowadays, to hire people to do what in the spacious days of nineteenth-century capitalism was done for love; but there is more to it than that. The actual work has grown more difficult and much more specialised. In 1896 the Fabian Society could publicly announce that it had no opinions on economics; the Fabian Society of the present-day has to have opinions—and to offer advice—not merely upon economics in the abstract, but upon a whole host of complicated questions which had barely presented themselves to the minds of the founders. And it has, moreover, if it is to be true to its own traditions, to try to be *right*, so far as is humanly possible, in the opinions it professes and the advice it gives. This, combined with the change mentioned above, means that the Society must, if it is to do its job properly, employ a staff of full-time or part-time experts, who not merely know their subject, but know—what is of at least equal importance—whom to consult, whom to ring up, when occasion arises; and if anyone complains that the Fabian Society of 1944 costs much more to run than the Fabian Society of 1892 or 1912, that, in addition to the increased output which I have already mentioned, is the answer.

To turn now to the subject of organisation—how is the work actually done? After a certain amount of trial and error we have adopted a method of organisation which is, broadly speaking, departmental. The pattern of all departments is broadly the same; there is a secretary, paid, half-paid, or unpaid as the case may be, and there is a Directing Committee, responsible to the Executive which has under it permanent and *ad hoc* sub-committees as required. All this organisation is very new. I do not want to over-emphasise the rapidity of growth, but I must remind readers who may have forgotten that in 1939 the directing staff of the Society consisted of a part-time General Secretary (John Parker), an Assistant Secretary (H. D. Hughes), and a newly-appointed Research Secretary (Richard Padley). There was a Women's Group, dating from the Suffrage days, which had an Annual Dinner; there was practically nothing else in the Society itself, though a certain amount of research activity was transferred from the N F R B.

THE SPECIALISED BUREAUX

Immediately after the outbreak of war, a War Aims Committee, with a voluntary secretary, was set up. This, so magnificent was its scope, included in theory all the activities now coming under the Colonial and International Bureaux; but it fairly soon (in the autumn of 1940) hived off the Fabian Colonial Bureau, the first of the present-day departments to come into existence. On it I do not propose to discourse here, for its secretary is speaking for herself in this issue of the *Quarterly*; suffice it to say that its life has been one of almost unbroken success, that it has succeeded in integrating an enormous proportion of British forward-thought on colonial affairs, that it is trusted by the accredited representatives of native populations, that it is a constant stimulus to the Colonial Office, that it has its finger in the pie of all Parliamentary discussion of Colonial affairs, and that it has sponsored several notable pieces of research and discussion, of which *Fabian Colonial Essays* and a study of the part to be played by cooperative movements in the building up of native economy (both now due to be published) are the most recent.

The International Bureau which, after some flounderings, took over the other half of the work of the old War Aims Committee and now has under its charge the Anglo-French Committee (producer of *France and Britain*), which was actually set up on the eve of the fall of France, is to date less a research body than a common meeting-ground for socialists and socialist sympathisers of all nationalities. In its book on relief and rehabilitation in Europe, published last year, it did an expert job, and before very long it will have something to say on the wider question of political Europe after the war; but so far

it has been known chiefly as a platform where free discussion, unhampered by past prejudice or war status can take place, where all can feel at home, and where visiting socialists—from China, for example, or the United States—can meet their comrades of other lands.

HOME RESEARCH AND PROPAGANDA

But, of course, the Fabian Society is a British society, and the main concern of its research must necessarily be with affairs at home. At the beginning of the war it led off with *The Home Front*, a Tract which posed the main problems which would confront the Labour movement during the war, and since then a gradually-constituted Home Research Committee has been endeavouring to work upon such of them as were within its resources. This necessarily involves a good deal of devolution and coordination; under the main Committee there at present work, for example, the Social Security Sub-Committee, engaged in pursuing the many issues which arise out of the Society's books on the subject, the Education Sub-Committee (which is naturally pretty busy at the moment), the Economics Sub-Committee, which has nearly finished a large book on War-time Control of Industry, and the Agricultural Policy Group; and it also oversees the research of two quasi-independent bodies, the Industrial Group and the Women's Group. It further conducts a number of other enquiries—see list of publications for examples—and answers others. It is the Society's core.

The Industrial Group is young, comparatively. Its main objective is two-fold: to get hold of the politically unorganised elements in industry and convert them to a planned socialist economy, and to organise an advisory system of experts; in its first year of existence it has been pursuing this aim by holding conferences and providing speakers on such questions as full employment, and by getting together panels of experts on a variety of different subjects. The Women's Group has been revived from its long slumbers; it also holds regular meetings of members and sympathisers, and is at present engaged on a big enquiry into the relative wages and conditions of men and women in a number of occupations.

The remaining major Committee, the Socialist Propaganda Committee, is not very happily named; for with the shortage of paper for popular pamphlets and the shortage of speakers for large meetings its job of propaganda for Socialism has been more and more encroached upon by that of organising Local Fabian Societies and Groups and satisfying the demands of these and of the affiliated societies—and of others who might be affiliated—for speakers. It is, in fact, the Organisation Committee for local societies, and in this way conducts its propaganda for Socialism—with occasional pauses to take breath and think about ways in which propaganda in general might be more efficiently conducted. It has a job which, next to the dreadful job of raising money, is one of the most tiresome, and one of the most important, in the Society.

* * * * *

Such is the pattern of organisation, of the work which the Fabian Society of 1944 does and the way in which it does it. There are enormous gaps, as we know very well. There are great fields which we have not touched, either because someone else is there already or because we have not the resources to cultivate them. For two of the earliest principles of the Society, by which we endeavour to abide, are ' Don't try and do somebody else's job ', and ' Don't start something unless you can see your way to do it properly '. If we can get more support, and more money, we can adventure further; meantime, these are the facts of today.

HOW A POLITICAL SOCIETY FUNCTIONS

The Story of the Fabian Colonial Bureau

by Rita Hinden

THE DEMOCRATIC BACKGROUND

In a highly organised democratic society, such as Britain, there are always ways of making oneself heard. Any group or society, which knows what it wants and has a point of view to offer, can capture at least a section of public opinion and bring its views to the attention of the authorities with an insistence not altogether to be ignored. Public opinion and Parliament, reinforcing and working through each other, are the powerful guardians of democratic rights and the levellers of injustice. Every citizen is free to make his approach to either, and his success will depend on his skill in putting over a case, the public response he can muster, the weight with which he is backed, and the strength of the opposition.

How can the appeal to public opinion and Parliament be made? Public opinion may be reached through the written or the spoken word. With a free press there is no end (except in wartime under paper restrictions) to the pamphlets which may be printed, to the books which publishers may be pressed to accept and somewhere inside the wide range of the British press—or at least in its correspondence columns—a place will always be found for the expression of a reasonable, or even an unreasonable, point of view. Then there is the approach to the public through demonstrations, through meetings, through the numerous conferences in which some sections of the people delight, discussion groups, gatherings of all sorts. And though the public in its widest sense may have no opinion at all on very many specialised or complicated subjects, there are always groups of individuals and political organisations who will stand firmly on the rights and wrongs of even the most abstruse issues.

This broad, and not always easy, approach to public opinion, can to some extent be short-circuited by a more specific and direct approach to Parliament. Question time in the House of Commons is one of the most precious and important manifestations of British freedom. For an hour every day before the parliamentary business commences, Members may put their questions to the Ministers and demand an answer on any matter within the whole sphere of government. If a group of Members of Parliament feel sufficiently strongly on a subject (and what they feel is largely influenced by what public opinion in their constituencies feels), they can press their questions week in and week out, and it will need a stubborn Minister to refuse them all satisfaction. There are other channels within the procedure of the House for venting grievances or expatiating on particular problems. The Adjournment of the House may be moved by a private member on any day, which gives him an opportunity for talking for half an hour on the particular bee then buzzing in his bonnet, and the

Minister or his deputy must be there to reply. There are certain opportunities—such as the Debate on the King's Speech, when almost any matter may be discussed; or Supply days when the Estimates for the different Departments are voted. Public opinion has a further outlet in the House of Lords. Procedure here has not been confined to the strait-jacket which the weight of Government business imposes on the House of Commons, and it is possible for members to put down motions for debate at almost any time and to command the ear of the House for almost as many hours as desired.

PUBLIC OPINION AND THE COLONIES

It was with this democratic background in mind that the Fabian Colonial Bureau started work at the end of 1940. Its experiences have by no means been special to itself, but they do sum up in a compact and vivid form the way in which a point of view can be effectively expressed, and even in some degree be translated into action. They afford an excellent example of how a political society can function within a democracy.

British public opinion on colonial affairs has been notoriously sluggish. This is deplorable because the authority for governing the empire lies with the Colonial Office, which is directly responsible to the British Parliament, in turn directly responsible to the British electorate. With an indifferent electorate, most M P s have not felt stimulated to enquire into the intricacies of colonial administration. There have always been a few stalwarts in Parliament, and a number of specialist organisations, who have watched the interests of dependent peoples. But with some exceptions, there was little coherence or organised drive in this work. There were all too few bodies who really understood and followed events in the different Colonies, who bothered to create direct personal contact with the Colonies, and were able to talk with regular authority; and the people in the Colonies who were suffering from a sense of grievance rarely knew to whom to turn to champion their claims.

THE FABIAN TRADITION

When the Fabian Society decided to establish a special department to deal with colonial affairs, its first action was to invite those colonial experts who were sympathetic with the Labour viewpoint, to join a committee to advise on the work, and act as a link between the Bureau and outside opinion. Mr. Creech Jones, who for some years had been one of the very few Members of Parliament to take a detailed and lively interest in colonial affairs, agreed to act as Chairman, and provide the liaison between the Bureau and Parliament. From the start the Bureau determined to work within the Fabian tradition, which has always commenced with research. There are too many organisations in all spheres of public life, clamouring for action, denouncing, appealing to public conscience, and too few who base their appeals and denunciations on solid knowledge and a painstaking collection of the facts. The Fabian Society is admirably, almost uniquely, placed for a combination of research and political action. It has not the resources of a university which might tempt it to pursue research for research's sake. Circumstances compel it, therefore, to concentrate chiefly on applied research, or—it might be called—*ad hoc* research. At the same time, as an affiliated society, with a long record of loyalty to the Labour Party, it has unique opportunities for meeting and working freely and amicably with Labour Members of Parliament and the Labour movement in general. It is clear, therefore, that the Fabian Society can act as a direct channel for transmitting the results of its members' research work to the key people of the Labour movement.

COLLECTING INFORMATION

The Colonial Bureau started with the absolute minimum of staff. Far-reaching research was out of the question to begin with, but it was possible to go right ahead with the collection of regular information regarding current events in the Colonies, and the creation of direct contacts with progressive organisations inside the Colonies themselves. This alone was a heavy task—there are, after all, more than fifty British Colonies in the Empire. Colonial newspapers were ordered, read regularly, and, with the aid of volunteers, cut and filed. It very soon became clear what were the main problems agitating the people of the different Colonies at that particular moment. With the help of the Chairman and other interested Members of Parliament these problems could be raised in the House or brought to the direct attention of the Secretary of State in correspondence. It took longer to establish personal contacts with colonial peoples and to gain their confidence. There is a long heritage of suspicion to be worn down, and it would be rash to claim that, even after three years' unremitting work, success in this direction is anything like complete. But, gradually, as it was shown that the Bureau, and the increasing number of Members of Parliament who collaborated in its work, were able to ventilate the grievances of colonial peoples, and sometimes to secure redress, confidence grew and correspondence from all parts of the Empire began to trickle in.

RESEARCH AND POLITICAL ACTION

But the Bureau could not be content to act merely as a channel for information on individual grievances. Most of these grievances were merely symptoms of deep-lying injustices and imperfections. Certain subjects demanded more careful study, and groups composed of some of the members of the Advisory Committee and some outside specialists, were set up to undertake detailed inquiries into special aspects of colonial administration. The first subject which forced itself on the attention of the Bureau was the inadequacy of trade union and other labour protection laws in the Colonies. A Committee was appointed on which a number of experienced trade unionists were invited to serve, and a careful study was made of every colonial trade union law. The weaknesses in industrial legislation in the Colonies soon came to light and the Committee did not need many meetings before it agreed that an approach to the Colonial Office must be made for an improvement in the legislation. A series of papers on industrial legislation were prepared, criticising the existing laws and putting forward proposals for their amendment; suggesting, too, that British trade unionists might be sent out to the Colonies to help put colonial trade unionism on its feet. These papers were presented to the Colonial Office, which then met a delegation from the Bureau and spent many hours in detailed discussion of the Bureau's proposals. It is not too extravagant to claim that the enormous improvement in industrial legislation which has taken place throughout the colonial empire in the last few years owes something to this work done by the Bureau and to the perpetual questions raised on the subject in Parliament.[1]

The successful work of the Labour Committee has been followed by other similar investigations. Just a few examples. The question of mineral concessions in the Colonies and the distribution of the profits of mines is fundamental in any planning for colonial prosperity. One member of the Bureau's Advisory Committee volunteered to collect the relevant information. This was discussed at length by the Committee which then put forward detailed criticisms and

[1] See *Labour Supervision in the Colonial Empire*, 1943. Col. 185. This Government White Paper makes special reference to the suggestions put forward by the Bureau.

proposals, now under active consideration inside the Colonial Office. The future of Kenya is another vexed problem. It was reported that the settlers there were pressing for renewed settlement schemes, with public assistance, after the war. Again, a member of the Bureau volunteered to collect all the relevant information, and to prepare a full record of the history and achievements of white settlement in Kenya. On the basis of this information a line of policy was discussed and hammered out by the Bureau Committee. The problem of Kenya was then debated, both in the House of Commons on the Adjournment and in a full debate in the House of Lords. The Bureau followed this up by the publication of a pamphlet on the subject. Another example—constant complaints were being heard about the composition and working of the Colonial Services. It was a difficult subject on which to express an opinion without a thorough knowledge of the facts. A Committee of the Bureau undertook to consider the structure of the Colonial Office and the Colonial Services, and made a detailed study of how the Colonial Services are recruited and trained, where their weaknesses lie, and how far they offer opportunities for the colonial peoples themselves. Out of this study there arose a host of recommendations for the improvement of the services. The results of the investigation, which involved hard and lengthy committee work, were published in a booklet, *Downing Street and the Colonies* and brought to the attention of the Colonial Office.

A final—but certainly not the least important—example, is the work of the Cooperative Committee of the Bureau. It has often been claimed that cooperation has a vital part to play in solving the problems of colonial poverty, and the Bureau was asked to undertake an investigation into the subject. A number of persons with specialist knowledge of this work (notably Mr. C. F. Strickland) were approached for advice, and they willingly prepared papers setting forth their own views and experience. A Committee, representative of the British and International Cooperative Movement, was then called together to consider these papers. A young British cooperator volunteered to draft them into a report. Enormous interest has gathered round this work. The Colonial Secretary was informed of its preparation by the Chairman of the Bureau in the course of a colonial debate. At the time of writing, the report, which embodies the views and labour of quite a host of experienced cooperators, and puts forward a number of detailed and practical proposals for encouraging cooperation in the Colonies, is just complete and ready for presentation to the Colonial Office. The report has also suggested how the British Cooperative Movement can help in developing the young colonial movement and this part of its proposals has already received the willing endorsement of important sections of the British movement.

APPEALS FROM THE COLONIES

Simultaneously with the development of this more fundamental research, and the constructive thinking to which it has given rise the Bureau has had to cope with the day-to-day problems which have been coming to its notice in increasing volume and urgency. A cable would suddenly arrive—for example, from Jamaica—saying 'Five trade unionists detained. Two trade unions banned. Please help'. Or, say, from the Gambia, 'Mass protest meeting against new press regulations. Please make representations Colonial Office'. Or, friends in Mauritius would wire 'May Day demonstrations prohibited'. Then would come letters pointing to the evils of forced labour in Kenya or Nigeria; telling of the infringement of civil liberties in Jamaica; asking for modifications to the new constitutional proposals in various of the West Indies; telling of rising costs of living without corresponding rises in wages; pointing to the failure to introduce rationing and the shortage of essential supplies; painting a picture of unrest among workers or of colour-bar incidents.

Here are a few extracts chosen at random. From a correspondent in the heart of Africa:

> 'Sir,—I have not time to mention so many matters, but I ask assistance if you it possible. We have been sandbagged, held down, held up, etc., as evidence herewith copy attached. I have been walked upon, sat upon, but also I have no helper. Hard laws are always created to hinder our chance and movements. I have seen againsted doz times the peoples who are fighting for the truth, freedom and peace for their country and for the rights of all peoples. The Associations here in the Colonies are disliked.
>
> Full assistance required.'

Numerous documents are attached to bear out these cryptic allegations. From Uganda come requests to help the Africans to a fairer share of the cotton trade. They write:

> 'Here is one of our problems. Cotton is grown by natives only. Cotton ginning and lint is only in hands of Europeans and Asiatics, capitalists, we are left helpless. The local Government helps non-native capitalists to get the profit of our labour. We grow cotton ourselves, but the local government encourage syndicates and pools of non-Africans to take the profit instead of encouraging us. We grow cotton, while non-natives get profit. The money left in hands are for taxes only. The growers have made so many times their complaints to the Government, have nothing done on it.'

From the West Indies come other complaints. In British Guiana two Italian doctors, well-beloved by the poorer part of the population, were interned because of their nationality. To help securing their release letters were sent to the Bureau.

> 'I am enclosing copies of a Petition and two resolutions which explain themselves. These documents, together with 7018 signatures of the petitioners, were presented to His Excellency the Governor, with an application that this matter should be forwarded to His Majesty's Secretary of State. In the name of humanity I appeal to you to do all you can for these doctors immediately—if you get their release for Christmas, a time of peace and goodwill, it will be a magnificent gesture by the Labour Party.'

From a West African Colony comes this letter:

> 'The Secretary of the African Civil Service Association has asked me to recommend to him any organisation in England which would help this association to secure the rights and privileges for which the Association has petitioned the Secretary of State for the Colonies. I could think of no other Society than the Fabian Colonial Bureau. You will receive pamphlets containing the complaints of the Association, and I am sure the Bureau will do all it can to secure readers thereto.'

From Mauritius come complaints about:

> '. . . the chaotic state of the Colony's food supply, the callous attitude of the responsible authorities towards the working classes . . . In view of the dictatorial attitude of the local government, its utter failure to even give a semblance of Democracy to its administration, we have to grin and wait for the end of the war, when it will be possible for us to demand a Revision of our obsolete Constitution, which is the cause of all our ills. Just think about a population of 420,000 inhabitants where only 10,000 have a right to vote.'

Sometimes individuals, perhaps from remote localities, write in a different strain.

> 'I have read through some of your research pamphlets and I was greatly impressed by the facts and opinions expressed in them. I have the ideals of a socialist and I want to be one. So I think it fit to be in a society where I shall have access to books, pamphlets, etc., of the great socialists. I hope this will pave the way towards my ambition.'

All these letters and cables—and now after three years the trickle has become a stream—demand action. Very often effective action can be taken and results obtained. The Colonial Office—indeed, any Government Department—cannot refuse to respond to informed representations. When the Jamaican trade unionists were detained and their unions banned, there were no less than five parliamentary questions on the Order Paper almost immediately. Barely a couple of weeks had passed before these oppressive orders had been rescinded. There is little doubt that forced labour has been kept within its narrow limits and is now likely to dwindle to nothing, because of the many protests which were made against it in Britain. (The Chairman of the Bureau moved the Adjournment of the House on the subject.) The Italian doctors in British Guiana are now back at work. There are a dozen and one cases which may be cited where representations to the authorities have been satisfactorily met and the grievances of individuals allayed.

BUILDING UP SUPPORT

But in all this work the Bureau has been conscious that for real strength it must broaden its base. It was not good enough to have a handful of enthusiasts working in London without the backing and interest of a wider public. It decided to offer membership facilities to anyone interested. In return for a small annual subscription members would receive all the publications of the Bureau, reports on its activities, and opportunities to attend Conferences and meetings. It was not easy to build up the first nucleus of supporters, but it can now be said, after three years' work, that there has grown up a steady membership of close on a thousand, and nearly double that number of subscribers to the Bureau's journal—*Empire*. The journal became possible through the generosity of one of the members of the Advisory Committee. It is still a small affair and appears only once in two months. But it has already been invaluable as a contact between the Bureau, its membership, and the outside world, and month by month its circulation grows. Attempts have also been made to reach directly to the public by a series of conferences. Two weekend conferences have been held in Oxford, two or three-day Conferences in London, and in 1943 two provincial Conferences were held in Leeds and Sheffield with the aid of the local Fabian Societies. The provincial conferences were attended by delegates from the local Labour Parties, trade unions, co-operative guilds, Common Wealth Groups, W E As, etc., and have proved of the first importance in creating interest in colonial affairs and spreading the knowledge of the Bureau's work.

Not only inside Britain, but in the Colonies themselves, the Bureau's base is being widened, and a two-way traffic of communication is being created. From the Colonies, friends and organisations send their cables and letters and also their newspapers and reports. From the office in London the publications of the Bureau are sent out. Not only are there very many individual subscribers now in the Colonies (both among Europeans of all classes and among Africans) but there are groups, organisations, bookshops, which order the Bureau's publications by the dozen (in some territories by the hundred) and resell them locally. In Nigeria a branch of the Fabian Society has been started and the Fabian Bookshop in London groans at times under the weight of its orders for literature. The orders are not all for the publications of the Colonial Bureau,

but for the general literature of the Society as well and indeed, for books of all kinds. Recently, large orders for publications have arrived from so far afield as Uganda. There is barely a Colony which publications of the Bureau do not reach, and with which there has not been built up a regular interchange.

CONCLUSION

It is not easy for one who has lived intensively in this work for three years to stand dispassionately aside and see it in perspective. A fairer picture might have been given if someone other than the deeply-immersed Secretary of the Bureau had been asked to write this article. It seems to me, though, to be no exaggeration to say that the Bureau has more than fulfilled the original purpose with which it set out—' to act as a clearing house for information, and to interest the public, the press and Parliament in colonial affairs '. From all over Britain there now come demands to the Bureau for speakers, for bibliographies, for information, for literature. From all over the Empire each week brings in a heavy post. The publications of the Bureau have all met with an eager demand—most of them have already had to be reprinted. More and more do visitors from the Colonies (both European and Colonial) make a point of calling in on the Bureau on their arrival in London to exchange news and views. In both Houses of Parliament, and in the more serious organs of the British press, there is always an opportunity for the knowledge and research collected by the Bureau to find a public platform. Finally, a direct and friendly relationship has been created with the Colonial Office itself, which has shown itself prepared to give the most full and courteous consideration to every one of the Bureau's representations—though ' consideration ' may not, of course, mean action.

All this considerable success is due to a very few factors. The Bureau has worked within the democratic constitutional framework of this country, utilising every avenue and opportunity which democracy offers. It has been able to command respect because of the stress it laid on the accuracy of its statements, its willingness to engage in painstaking research and its persevering collection of information. It has had a valuable point of view to put over and has not flagged in so doing. And finally, it has had the good fortune to find altruistic and loyal collaborators (here thanks are due to Sir Drummond Shiels, Ben Riley, M P, R. Sorensen, M P, Lord Faringdon, Frank Horrabin, Mrs O. R. Cruchley, A. Dalgleish and many others) who were prepared to champion the work inside Parliament and out, to give unstintingly of their special knowledge and time, and to expect no return other than the spread of colonial liberty in its widest sense. Of course this is not the method for effecting revolutions. But it *is* a method—the method of ' eternal vigilance '—whereby the rights and freedoms of colonial peoples may be safeguarded, and opportunities assured them for shaping their own future in the way that they themselves desire.

POINTS FOR PLANNERS

THE EDUCATION BILL AND THE WHITE PAPER.

Since the policy of putting a White Paper on a particular field of reconstruction to simmer in the pot of public discussion and parliamentary debate before proceeding to a Bill, has apparently come to stay; it is worth while noting in what respects the simmering process has altered or modified the original Government scheme, and what amendments are still on the table for further seasoning of the dish at Committee stage.

Major advances on the White Paper in the Bill are the setting up of two Advisory Councils which will take the initiative in advising the Minister as compared with the existing Consultative Committee which can only deal with what the Board lays before it. The ' Minister-President's ' powers are now extended from supervisory duties to full responsibility for the effective carrying out of the new policy by the local authorities. One clause of great importance is the Minister's right of veto on the appointment of a chief education officer which he regards as unsuitable. On this it is to be hoped that an amendment may be secured as a proper corollary giving the right of appeal to the Minister to a chief education officer on unreasonable dismissal.

The general speeding up of the ' gentlemanly crawl ' of the White Paper's time table by nearly two years is an improvement; Part II now has an ' Appointed Day '. Outstanding is the substantial addition to proposed expenditure on Nursery Schools and the trebling of the pittance to general technical and adult education. The latter have now been brought within the development scheme in the first four years. Powers to establish boarding facilities indicated in the White Paper for Local authorities are strengthened by the addition of the parents, wishes to what is ' necessary and desirable ' in the authorities' view. There is some provision, although too scanty, for financial aid from the Exchequer to help very poor authorities. Many will press for bolder measures to redress the heavy weight, in part at least, which will fall upon certain areas if they are to achieve ' prescribed standards ', with no rating reform on general lines in the offing.

Other modifications on the White Paper are the result of activity by two special interests: one, the Churches and the other the Part III authorities. It is anticipated that the limits of compromise with these two groups have been achieved in the drafted bill and that no important changes will be made in Committee. The debate on Clause 14 at the end of February is indicative. The Churches, however, have got the guarantee of up to 75% of the costs of transferring a ' special agreement ' school to a new site where public policy renders this necessary; and once the new buildings are up they will then have the advantages of an ' Aided ' school. Although the Anglicans will not press for amendments guaranteeing total costs of building a transferred school on a new site it is thought that the Catholics have not yet given up the struggle. Noncomformists will welcome the provision of agreed syllabus teaching in ' aided ' and ' special agreement ' schools which is of great importance to them in the single school areas controlled mostly by the Anglicans, since they have not gained their amendment to Clause 14 making all the schools in single school areas ' controlled '. The Anglicans on the other hand have now the right to bring in their own outside instructors for religious teaching in the little ' controlled ' schools where the staff does not number more than two, and ' Reserved ' teachers are not practicable.

If the Government gave way on the further amendments proposed by one or other religious interest the whole structure of the fine balance set up in the Bill would topple and one cannot therefore envisage any further amendment that would not dislocate the entire religious compromise.

Local educational interests have secured something substantial. Instead of district committees of a supervisory type making recommendations to the L.E.A. there are now to be divisional executives with delegated powers for primary, secondary, and, where population so justifies, further education. The delegation schemes will be drawn up by the County authority and the divisional executives jointly and placed before the Minister. Small boroughs and Urban District Councils with a population of 60,000 can contract out of the divisional scheme and prepare their own schemes of delegated powers for primary and secondary education direct to the Minister through the post office of the County Committee.

What are the gaps that remain? First, there appear no safeguards in the Bill for broadly equivalent standards of technical and modern schools with grammar schools, which would ensure that they developed parity of prestige as quickly as possible. Secondly, fees are not abolished in direct grant schools. It is going to be difficult to define what an 'assisted' school is unless many amendments tabled are carried through clarifying what 'assistance' is and how far all 'assisted' schools are to fall into line. It will be interesting to see whether Mr. Butler is determined to keep the direct grant school as a flexible make weight for the future between the independent schools on the one hand and the maintained schools on the other. That there are some arguments for as well as against this, even left-wing educationalists will admit!

The speeding up is only partial. No Appointed Day has been set for the Young People's Colleges which are not likely to get under way until 1948, which means that the wartime evacuated school children will not get even this small portion of the new scheme and they are a group which may well become, educationally, a lost generation.

No time limits are set in the bill for the reorganisation of staffing and equipment in primary schools. Some reformers regard this as such a crucial item that they would be prepared to forgo the speedy raising of the school-leaving age to sixteen to get quicker complete reorganisation of the primary field. However since sixteen is not apparently on the horizon for the next six years it is not a clear-cut alternative for them to choose.

Size of classes has been properly left out of the Bill as a matter for Regulations. Teachers were never really in it; but the amendment just accepted that marriage will no longer be ground for dismissal has most valuable and important bearing on the future attractions of the teaching profession to women.

M. F. Y.

A NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE (Cmd. 6502 H M S O 1/-)

In the new White Paper, the British flair for compromise, so often over-emphasised, finds a genuine expression. Forewarned by the previous Minister's rebuff by the B M A representative body, who rejected at sight his proposals for a whole-time, salaried, local-authority-controlled health service, the authors have withdrawn strategically to positions possibly prepared beforehand, with their major forces intact. Thus the new plan retains the Ministry of Health as top of an organisational pyramid, supported by two nominated boards. Both of the latter are predominantly medical and one, the Central Medical Board, is to have wide executive and disciplinary powers—a sort of B M A plus General Medical Council. Doctors will view with some uneasiness the authority of such a body to determine not only their salaries and terms of service but also as individuals their complete professional life. Laymen will

see, beyond the immediate issue, an ominous precedent for extension of the corporation principle to other fields.

The Consumer, it seems, would be represented both in Parliament (rather remotely, as experience with previous public corporations has shown) and on local Health Boards, the geography of which will depend, not on any fresh regionalisation but on *ad hoc* combinations of existing local government areas.

Further concessions to organised medical opinion, so far as this is represented by the B M A, are the continuance of the voluntary hospital system and of private practice by doctors inside and outside the State service, and payment of those in the service by both salary and capitation fee. It is difficult to see how charity-financed institutions can exist within even so loose a framework of nationalisation, let alone retain their peculiar methods of local administration, already anomalous and anachronistic. It seems clear that they must quickly wither away and become painlessly absorbed into the major structure; perhaps that is indeed the White Paper's intention. Private practice for Doctors unwilling to enter the State Service was always envisaged, though this is now permitted to newly-qualified men as well as to those previously established in practice. That doctors in the service may also practice privately must imply that they can offer better medical attention to patients who are willing to pay an outside fee. This would introduce a Black Market which would seriously menace the prestige of the State service, quite apart from its demoralisation of the State doctors, and it should be absolutely opposed as one of the most dangerous flaws in the whole scheme. As regards payment, salary alone is much preferable to income based on the number of patients served. If Doctors are as anxious to compete with one another as the B M A insists, they should do so in quality rather than quantity or speed of turnover. Mass-production will not do in medical practice.

Apart from the vestigial capitation fee, N H I practice, which the B M A wished to extend, will pass away unlamented. A useful measure in its day, it was based essentially on the individual isolated general practitioner and would have remained a solid obstacle to cooperative medicine. This latter the White Paper recognises as the medicine of the future and, while its proposals for group practice seem rather tentative, it is clear that a fully salaried Health Centre service, with a network of State hospitals and ancillary functions, is its ultimate aim. The opposition knows this and an editorial in the *British Medical Journal* has pointed out that achievement of this aim will inevitably annihilate all the concessions so carefully offered to reaction. That they will give battle cannot be doubted: the time is near when the consumers, the lay public, must enter the fray and they must be clear on the issues involved.

In no field is it more easy to be misled by experts, and here the experts are unfortunately mostly on the wrong side.

B. C. T.

THE PECKHAM EXPERIMENT A Study of the living structure of society
By Innes H. Pearse and Lucy H. Crocker (Allen & Unwin 12/6)

What *is* health? The answer given by the biologists responsible for the Peckham Health Centre seems to be that health is a product of the full use of the potentialities of the individual, physical and mental, and that this is only possible in a community so arranged as to offer opportunity to develop individual potentialities while partaking in community life; conversely that the desire for full function in community life is largely a result of health in its full sense, and is inhibited by the presence of even a minor degree of physical disorder.

Housed in a modern building consisting of concrete platforms on supporting pillars, the outer walls and inner partitions being chiefly of glass, the building

was intended to provide for 2,000 families (roughly 7,500 individuals). It was built in such a way that the scientist could observe the members of the centre continuously, its purposes being: (1) Observations of the actions of the individual and of the family as a whole in response to the flux in their environment; (2) A study of the changes that ensue thereon in the environment itself; (3) Physiological studies of each individual and of the family who are thus acting on the environment.

The family is taken as the biological unit, and therefore the unit of membership of the centre, on the argument that it is only the male plus female which constitutes a human unit, and that it is, through children, the ' growing point ' of society.

Periodic health overhaul is a condition of membership. This is so arranged in time as to make it easily available to all. The members of each family receive the health report and this is used as a source of education through self-knowledge. Facts are given, and advice only if it is sought, a principle making for independent thought and effort. Ante- and post-natal clinics and special examination in time of need are part of the medical service, also the supply of certain drugs, and similar small services, at cost price.

Socially the centre is designed to provide the possibility of a full social and individual life to its members. Self, and mutual, service is the principle on which it is run, e.g., mothers take turns to provide nursery teas for all the children.

The centre provided every variety of new activities as the demand arose, a small charge above the membership fee (1/– per family per week) being made for activities undertaken by members over 14 years of age. For children no extra charge was made.

The opportunity to develop each new phase of growth throughout life voluntarily and in mutual agreement with family or contemporaries was found to produce ' An order not authoritative, nor mechanical, but of a functional character . . . a recognition of the total situation . . . an altruism, not of a moral order but of actual " physical " constitution . . .'

The importance of what is termed ' familiar nurture ' is one of the points stressed—the contact by the individual with familiarised food or experience before actually partaking of these directly, e.g., the weaning of the child at the table from which its mother fed, or, the contact with different age-groups so that there is familiarity with the approaching age and experience. This point should be carefully considered when the promotion of community centres or youth clubs is being considered. This contact with seniors was also found to be the most successful way of promoting activities in the centre, an expert teacher being found to have an inhibiting effect on those without skill, whereas the calling in, by a group of learners, of one more proficient implies cooperation and enthusiasm.

There is much to be learned from this report about the importance of an optimum standard of health to sociability, and of sociability to health. Does it necessarily mean that ante- and post-natal care, education (it was intended to start a school), hobbies and medical overhaul should be housed in the same building ? The answer surely must be that this is the case only for an experiment since otherwise the communities would soon prove to be too closed. It means, however, that there should be close cooperation between these services, and that a medical service with the promotion of health through periodic health overhaul, as well as the treatment of sickness, as its aim, is most desirable.

As the membership of the centre was *voluntary*, and since the ' problem class ' at each end of the social scale, and unmarried adults were debarred from membership, the centre was by no means all-embracing. For experimental purposes this was necessary from a practical point of view but one left feeling that this report implies a more general application, a more absolute answer to the questions of health, education and leisure services than is the case.

E. M. G.

A PUBLIC LIBRARY SERVICE. Proposals by the Council of the Library Association.

Most public librarians, with a sense of the importance of their calling, have been painfully aware of the inequalities and inefficiencies of the municipal library system in Britain. Any serious attempt, therefore, to remodel and regenerate a service possessing such immense potentialities for good is to be heartily welcomed, and merits careful consideration. Public libraries, armed with experience and enthusiasm, are ready to forget the opposition which they have long endured, and to take their place as an essential factor in the social welfare of the country. In this endeavour they are chiefly hampered by the inequalities of local finance.

The main purpose of the proposals of the Library Association Council is to provide machinery to overcome existing disparities and inadequacies, in order that citizens, in every area of the country, may be guaranteed the best possible public library facilities. It is proposed that the provision of adequate public library services should be made compulsory: the implementing of such a proposal would wipe out the black spots where no library provision exists, and would vastly improve others where the existing service is inefficient and inadequate.

A further suggestion is that there should be an appropriate Government department responsible for co-ordinating the work of local library authorities and insisting upon efficiency. While the necessary measure of official control and inspection would be of salutary value among the more backward authorities, the system might not be without its disadvantages when applied to the more progressive and skilfully administered library systems.

Again, it is proposed that ' all local authorities must be rendered financially able to attain efficiency '. This proposal strikes, perhaps, at the fundamental difficulty with which local authorities are now faced. The dependency of public library services upon rateable values and population figures results in an unfair penalisation of the smaller urban areas: the proposal is that grants to library authorities should be made from the national exchequer, and that there should be ' some suitable improvement' in the local financial system which will remove these local disabilities '. Here it seems that the two parts of the proposal should be regarded as *alternatives*, and not as concurrent possibilities.

The fourth of the ' conditions of paramount importance ' deals with the composition and size of local government areas. It is contended that the population of a library area should lie between a quarter and three-quarters of a million, embracing a ' socially cohesive unit ' It is possible, however, that such large units might be unwieldy to administer and unrepresentative in character, and the considered opinion of many librarians may well be that the most successful and satisfactory public library administrations, at least in certain areas, are those related much more intimately to the needs of localities.

Consideration is given to certain special services, and the proposals emphasise the essential *book-service* of a public library system, to the exclusion of lectures and other extension activities. With experience of the valuable links formed between the general public and the book service of public libraries through various adult educational activities, there is likely to be some considerable dissension among librarians on this important point.

Other proposals concern the importance of technical qualifications for the professional staff, and suggest that library staffs of the future should be divided into two main categories composed of technical staff (librarians) and service staff: while proper qualifications are of the utmost value to the technical proficiency of a public library system, one may well deplore a form of academic snobbery in the implied suggestion that graduates should receive preferential treatment by virtue of their degrees.

There will be many criticisms of these ' proposals ' by the Council of the Library Association, but it is to be hoped that they will be constructive and not

destructive. Post-war reconstruction should provide an opportunity for the thorough re-organisation of the public library service along the right lines, and every conscientious public librarian will congratulate the Association on a praiseworthy attempt to bring to a head the discussion of all those matters that vitally affect public library administration.

F. S.

MASS EDUCATION IN AFRICAN SOCIETY. (Col. No. 186. H M S O 1/-.)

This Report is of the first importance as a step towards the constructive realisation of ' trusteeship '. Drawing on the experience of Russia, China and Turkey, it attempts to adapt it to the conditions existing in the British African Territories.

Particular stress is laid upon the need to regard education sociologically, and on the equal importance of the cooperation and education of the adult. Accordingly the Report, with its Annexure, outlines a means of educating the whole community, of enabling it to maintain its cohesion in the face of, and to gain advantage from, the changing life resulting from contact. The danger inherent in the present emergence in colonial areas of a mass consciousness that is impatient of what it takes to be official apathy is noted, and constructive action is shown to be essential if this explosive temper is to be controlled and guided.

The need for Africans themselves to be the main agents in the improvement of African life and the enlistment of the more progressive as teachers and leaders in a mass education movement is a fundamental assumption in realising the four main objectives: (a) the wide extension of schooling for children with the goal of universal school ' within a measurable time '; (*b*) the extension of literacy among adults, and the development of literature and libraries; (*c*) the planning of mass education of the community as a community movement; (*d*) finally, welfare plans and mass education plans must be coordinated.

In the Annexure is detailed the basic form of an organisation to put the plan into effect. The central place is taken by Mass Education Officers to correlate the efforts of many existing official and unofficial agencies which are already contributing separately to community education—churches, missions, cooperative societies, trade unions, teachers' associations and so on. When coordinated these would combine the spreading of literacy with immediate practical remedial measures directed against such problems as infantile mortality, malnutrition and juvenile delinquency. But, continues the Report, unless those who carry it out understand the society with which they are dealing and the way it is changing under modern conditions, the plan must fail. Thus, sociological training is essential for the personnel, who will then be able to adjust the ' curriculum ' as needed. Their work will cover improvements in health, agriculture and rural economics, while at the same time encouraging the growth of strong units of local government, sound family and social life, recreational and leisure time activities. Each area will need special plans for its own problems; but literacy must be regarded as fundamental and all children and adults below a certain age, the Report suggests, must within two or three years be receiving instruction in reading and writing if in nothing else.

B. H.

BOOK REVIEWS

Home Affairs

ENGLAND'S ROAD TO SOCIAL SECURITY by Karl de Schweinitz (O U P 15/-)

Written by an American primarily for United States students and administrators this volume traces, by illuminating reference to contemporary documents, the British effort through six centuries to find the way to social security. The author rightly believes that some knowledge of the long duel between Government and poverty is part of a general culture.

The book makes excellent reading, and the Beveridge Report, with its ' quality of inevitability ' is adequately dealt with as setting the standard for the next stage in British social history. There is a good bibliography and an index.

A. F

FOOD AND THE PEOPLE by Sir John Boyd Orr (Pilot Press 3/6)

A useful summary by a leading nutritionist of recent findings and investigations, concluding with some cautious post-war recommendations. A particularly valuable feature is the list of pamphlets and reports on food and agricultural policy with critical—occasionally very critical—comments. The 24 photographs are a mistake. They add nothing to the argument and cheapen it by their irrelevance. F. W. B.

THE FUTURE OF AGRICULTURE edited by L. F. Easterbrook (Todd Publishing Company 7/6)

Eight short essays by prominent agriculturists, including Sir George Stapledon, Dr Dudley Stamp and the Secretary of the National Farmers' Union. The best contribution is S. J. Wright's on the future of agricultural mechanisation, the others tending to provide ' the mixture as before '

F. W. B.

PARLIAMENTARY REPRESENTATION by J. F. S. Ross (Eyre & Spottiswoode 10/6)

Much the best analysis of the House of Commons since the end of the last war that has yet been done—far more profound than *Tory M P.* Mr Ross produces inescapable facts about the predominance of wealth, public schools, Oxford and Cambridge, and relatives of the peerage in Parliament, and has valuable notes on the finance of elections. He shows conclusively how hard it is for the man of moderate means, unless he belongs to a very few professions, such as journalism, to enter the House ; and shows, also, how the high average age of the Labour Party, which has given rise to so much comment, is in fact a result of the structure of society. The final chapters advocate P R.

M. I. C.

OUTLINES OF CENTRAL GOVERNMENT by John J. Clarke (Pitman 9/-)

A new, shortened and therefore handier edition of this valuable guide to British administrative and judicial institutions. Sections III–V, which contain new sections on wartime departments and wartime developments in the older departments up to mid-1943, are particularly useful. J. C. G.

IRON AND STEEL IN BRITAIN, 1870-1930, by T. H. Burnham and G. O. Hoskins (Allen & Unwin 25/-)

How far was the decline in the British iron and steel industry during 1870–1930, as compared with U S and Europe, due to factors external to, or to limitations within, the industry ? Perhaps their interrelation was too complex to permit a clear answer. Despite lavish use of statistics and industrious study of detail this monograph does not seem to find one. A pity it stops at 1930 : if individualism and free trade were part of the trouble in 1870–1930, how far did cartelisation and protection improve matters in the thirties ?

P C

International

WHEN HOSTILITIES CEASE (Gollancz 4/6)

The period of war cannot be divided from the post-war epoch. What will happen when hostilities cease will be of vital importance for the whole post-war period. The International Bureau of the Fabian Society have devoted a major part of their activities to the investigation of this problem. The results of a Conference held in December 1942 have now been published in this book. In the meantime, the question of Relief and Reconstruction has made further progress. However, its basic problems are still unsolved and have even taken on a more acute aspect. The serene and optimistic Preface by Philip Noel-Baker and the Introduction by Leonard Woolf are followed by Julian Huxley, who demands that Reconstruction should be part of a revolutionary world transformation. Many of the principles laid down by Professor Laski have since been adopted by U N R R A. Arnold Forster demands an international control as a way to international economic cooperation. In an excellent paper, Professor Marrack draws attention to the political consequences of famine in Europe. Dr A. Bourne compares the conditions created by this war to the destruction caused by the Thirty Years' War. J. Hammond very justly stresses the long-term character of the reconstruction of European agriculture. K. Brooks gives an elaborate study on the problem of Displaced Persons which, in the meantime, has assumed a far wider scope. The book will be of great value to all those who are occupied with the problem of international relief and its political implications. R. B.

OUR SETTLEMENT WITH GERMANY by H. N. Brailsford (Penguin Special 9d)

OCCUPIED EUROPE Issued by Royal Institute of International Affairs (2/--)

What should be done with Germany after the war? Every Fabian should read Mr Brailsford's book, then buy six more copies and distribute them among his (not-so-progressive) friends. At long last someone has spoken out fearlessly, exploding all the current nonsense about dismemberment and re-education, reminding us of forgotten, evergreen truths. He does not pretend that wise solutions can easily be found; he admits many difficulties to be almost insurmountable, e.g. insistence on German submission to international control before the Great Powers are willing to submit; but he concedes neither jot nor tittle to prejudice and passion.

'Occupied Europe,' is an objective and reliable account in best Chatham House style of how the Nazis mobilised Europe's resources, followed by more than tentative suggestions for the future. It prepares the British public for post-hostilities sarcifices (continued rationing) and suggests that unification of Europe's main industries might be preserved. For the rest it shies off all the reconstruction problems. One curious omission is all mention of oil in Germany's war effrort. P. L. Y.

RURAL SOCIOLOGY AND RURAL SOCIAL ORGANISATION by Dwight Sanderson (Chapman & Hall 24/-)

The Professor of Rural Sociology of Cornell University has produced what will inevitably become a classic for all students of American agriculture. In some 700 pages he has packed a multitude of facts, theory and ideas. The result makes most stimulating study. Professor Sanderson is conscious throughout of the change on agricultural economics wrought by the 1914-18 war and is clearly worried as to the effects of today's agricultural policy changed again by the present conflict.

As a consequence of tariffs the costs of manufactured goods to the farmer were raised and he was at an impossible disadvantage in maintaining his share of the national income. Much was done by the Roosevelt administration to remedy the farmers' plight, but the trends that resulted are not all pleasing to Prof. Sanderson, who prefers the small family farm based on local economy to the large factory farm based on central control. The farmers' prosperity, it is now realised, depends on the raising of the nutritive standard not only in those countries ravaged by war but in the United States itself. In that direction lies the cure for Professor Sanderson's fears. E. D.

AN ATLAS OF POST-WAR PROBLEMS by J. F. Horrabin (Penguin Books 9d)

Maps can be dangerous things, and some of the maps in this, the latest of J. F. Horrabin's remarkable output of atlases of current affairs, have been criticised for supporting the thesis that Europe, and indeed the world, must be planned on lines that make the present boundaries look just silly. Forty-four maps—and every one of them states an issue and raises a problem that affects the lives and happiness of millions. E. R. P

THE UNITY OF EUROPE by Hilda Monte (Gollancz 6/–)

It is comparatively easy to write about the purely 'political considerations of the post-war European problem: of retribution, of federation, and so on. It is another thing to produce an absorbing and easily digested study of the economic realities of the problem. Hilda Monte has done this in admirable fashion. J. H.

General

THE CRISIS OF THE NATIONAL STATE by W. Friedmann (Macmillan, 1943 12/6)

This book is a study of the decline of nationalism in our day. His general thesis is that the national state is a political institution of relative value, determined by a set of ideological, economic and social conditions, and is already an anachronism. His analysis is thorough, scholarly, well loaded with quotations, but always interesting and readable. In particular, he makes two very suggestive points. First, he argues that the national state is incapable of meeting the stresses and strains of modern warfare; and, second, he draws attention to the curious time-lag which still allows 'patriotism' to remain a living force (to wit, in Nazi-occupied Europe) although its political rationale has disappeared. X.

THE ADVENTURES OF THE YOUNG SOLDIER IN SEARCH OF THE BETTER WORLD by C. E. M. Joad (Faber & Faber 6/–)

Dr Joad guys various competitors for the public ear (including a Red Robot and a surely fabulous Red-Tape Worm) with wit and relish. In a personal appearance he deprecates enthusiasm, and suggests Salvation by Faith *and* Works, having already presented the opposed (or complementary) doctrines sympathetically through the mouths of the astral Heardhux and the terrestrial Transportouse. K. H.

INTERGLOSSA by Lancelot Hogben (Pelican: Penguin Books 9d)

Everyone is agreed on the desirability of a universal language. But is this to be a national language, in which case Ogden's Basic holds the field; or would it be better to avoid resentment against 'linguistic Herrenvolk' by devising a language which will be everybody's language because it is nobody's? Prof. Hogben prefers the latter, and in the empty hours of fire-watching at Aberdeen he has constructed Interglossa, whose word-material is based on roots, mostly Greek, that are internationally current in science. E. R. P.

THE STRUCTURE OF MORALE by J. T. MacCurdy (Cambridge University Press 8/6)

A book for the serious lay reader (as well as the specialist) interested in the problems of mass psychology. Particularly directed towards the reactions to war conditions; but useful as a corrective to the chess-board approach to post-war problems. H. C.

INFANTS WITHOUT FAMILIES by Dorothy Burlingham and Anna Freud (London, George Allen & Unwin, Ltd 3/6)

A useful account of the social relationships of young children in the Hampstead Residential Nurseries, offering valuable material for the psychologist and educationist. The general conclusions are that whilst residential nurseries "offer excellent opportunities for detailed and unbroken observation of child development", their value as educational institutions depends upon a close emotional contact being maintained between the children and the grown-ups. S. I.